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GETTY IMAGES

HEENES SENTENCED
Both balloon boy parents get jail time for staging the hoax **4**

A WIN FOR OBAMA
Jubilant Democrats set to pass landmark health care legislation **3**



REDSKINS WISH LIST
Off-season moves that could make up for a truly awful season **10**

KEEPING THE FAITH

With a remarkable knack for intuiting children's wishes and recalling details about their lives, one local Santa Claus has made steadfast believers out of even his oldest visitors **9**

PHOTO BY TRACY A. WOODWARD/TWP

am **38** **28** **pm**

FOR EXTENDED FORECAST, SEE PAGE 21



WeekendPass: 'Young Frankenstein' stomps into D.C.



EYE OPENERS

Man Survives Cheesy Pivotal Movie Plot Point

Police say a Pennsylvania man has his belt to thank for escaping injury in a weekend shooting. Police in Lancaster say the unidentified victim was driving when he was fired at Sunday evening. Bullets struck the car and one passed into the cabin, hitting his belt before stopping. Police says the man was unhurt. The investigation is continuing but the victim is not cooperating. (AP)

Couple Survives Cheesy Rom-Com Movie Ending

A woman in a wedding gown surprised her fiancé by greeting him at a Texas airport along with a justice of the peace. Robyn Moore and William Acosta exchanged vows Monday at Corpus Christi International Airport after he got off a plane arriving from Toledo, Ohio. Acosta, who was wearing jeans and a sweater, says he was speechless and thrilled. Moore says she and Acosta "spent half our relationship in airports." (AP)

Bank Survives Cheesy Caper-Movie Thief Antics

Despite the traditional fur-trimmed costume, this Santa was no saint. According to Metropolitan Nashville police, a man wearing a Santa Claus suit — including hat, beard and mustache — and dark sunglasses robbed a SunTrust Bank on Tuesday morning, demanding money from the teller at gunpoint. (AP)

The Big Picture



WORKERS CELEBRATE the completion of the first tunnel across the Yellow River on Tuesday in Zhengzhou, China. The tunnel's completion marks a breakthrough in the central line of China's gigantic South-north Water Diversion Project. (EXPRESS)

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In Brief



MICHAEL DOWERY/AP

Teresa Heinz is the wife of Sen. John Kerry and heir to a corporate fortune.

BOSTON

Teresa Heinz Reveals Fight With Breast Cancer

Teresa Heinz says she is being treated for breast cancer discovered through mammography and argues that younger women should continue undergoing the tests despite a federal panel's recent recommendation to reduce their frequency. The wife of the 2004 Democratic presidential nominee, Sen. John Kerry, D-Mass., said she found out in late September that she had cancer after having her annual mammogram.

BUTNER, N.C.

Madoff in Medical Center

The Bureau of Prisons says Bernard Madoff has been moved from a North Carolina federal prison to a prison medical facility for undisclosed reasons. Madoff has been imprisoned since March, when he pleaded guilty to fraud charges and admitted cheating thousands of investors out of billions of dollars. (AP)

WASHINGTON

New Home Sales Dive

Sales of new homes plunged unexpectedly last month to the lowest level since April, a sign the housing recovery will be rocky and heavily dependent on the generosity of Uncle Sam. The 11 percent slump from October's pace shows that consumers are taking their time following an extension of a deadline for first-time buyers to qualify for a tax credit. (AP)

Holiday Schedule

Express will not publish on Friday in observance of Christmas. Regular publishing will resume on Monday.

Health Care Filibuster Is Broken

Senate likely to pass landmark legislation on Christmas Eve

Washington

Energized Senate Democrats pushed President Obama's landmark health care overhaul past a final procedural hurdle Wednesday, setting up a Christmas Eve vote to pass the legislation extending coverage to 30 million Americans.

Democrats voted 60-39 to end a GOP filibuster and move to a final vote Thursday. All 58 Democrats and two independents hung together against unanimous Republican opposition. It was the 24th day of debate on the bill.

"It is now only hours until this Senate will pass meaningful health care reform," said Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus, D-Mont.

"It has been a long time coming," Baucus said. "I thank God that I have lived to see this day."

It was the third time Democrats have put up 60 votes on procedural measures since Monday.



HARAZ N. GHANBARI/AP

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid has been working on a health care bill for months.

Final passage requires just a simple majority.

The sweeping legislation, crafted over months of laborious negotiations, would dramatically remake the country's health care system with new requirements for nearly everyone to purchase insurance. The government would provide subsidies to help lower-income people pay for coverage. Unpopu-

lar insurance company practices such as denying coverage to people with pre-existing conditions would be banned.

Powerless to stop the bill, Republicans stepped up their attacks on the legislation.

"Tomorrow the Senate will vote on a bill that makes a bad situation worse," Sen. Charles Grassley, R-Iowa, said on the Senate floor.

What's Next

Even if the Senate approves the health care legislation as expected, the bill cannot go to President Obama for his signature until Congress resolves differences between the versions passed by the House and the Senate. Some are contentious, especially stricter provisions in the House against using government money to pay for insurance coverage for abortions and the House's income tax increase for high-earning Americans. (AP)

"This bill slid rapidly down the slippery slope to more and more government control of health care."

The final vote is now set for 7 a.m. Thursday. It had originally been scheduled for 7 p.m., but Republicans agreed not to use all their debate time so they could leave town earlier for the holidays.

The last time the Senate voted on Christmas Eve was 1895, on a military affairs bill concerning employment of former Confederate officers, according to the Senate Historical Office. ERICA WERNER (AP)

Amtrak Troubles Delay Travelers

Newark, N.J.

An electrical problem outside New York City put train service at a standstill up and down the East Coast for three hours Wednesday, leaving commuters and holiday travelers stopped in their tracks or scrambling for alternatives.

Service was restored around 11:30 a.m., Amtrak spokesman Cliff Cole said, but delays were expected throughout the afternoon.

The stoppage stranded thousands of travelers on trains and in stations from Boston to Washington, D.C. Some commuters in New York and New Jersey were able to switch to subway trains in and out of the city, but others weren't



MATT ROURE/AP

A passenger views an Amtrak schedule Wednesday at a station in Philadelphia.

as fortunate.

At Penn Station in New York City, travelers packed a waiting area, sitting on suitcases with bags of holiday gifts scattered

around them on the floor. A display board showed grim news for every train.

Lyn Hunt and four family members had been traveling since Saturday — or trying to. Their trip to Newark from England had to be rerouted through Chicago because of the snowstorm that swept up the East Coast over the weekend.

The family then traveled by Amtrak from Chicago to New York, only to be delayed again Wednesday as they tried to take a train north.

"We've decided that our motto is adapt, improvise and overcome," Hunt said. "We don't know yet how we will adapt or overcome this."

DAVID PORTER (AP)

Hearsay



"I offer an Al Het for any words or deeds of mine that may have [stigmatized Israel]."

— FORMER PRESIDENT JIMMY CARTER, APOLOGIZING TO THE JEWISH COMMUNITY IN AN OPEN LETTER. AL HET IS A PLEA FOR FORGIVENESS IN HEBREW.

‘Balloon Boy’ Parents Are Given Jail Time

Fort Collins, Colo.

The parents who carried out the balloon boy hoax were sentenced to jail Wednesday and given strict probation conditions that forbid them from earning any money from the spectacle for four years.

Richard Heene was sentenced to 90 days in jail, including 60 days of work release that will let him pursue his job as a construction contractor while serving his time. His wife, Mayumi, was sentenced to 20 days in jail.

Richard Heene choked back tears as he said he was sorry, especially to the rescue workers who chased down false reports that his 6-year-old son had floated away in



Richard and Mayumi Heene enter a Fort Collins, Colo., courtroom for sentencing.

a balloon on Oct. 15. It was a stunt designed to generate attention for a reality TV show.

“I do want to reiterate that I’m very, very sorry. And I want to apologize to all the rescue workers

out there, and the people that got involved in the community. That’s it,” said Richard Heene, whose wife did not speak at the hearing.

Prosecutors asked for the maximum sentence for the husband, saying that a message needs to be sent to promoters who attempt to carry out hoaxes to generate publicity. Chief Deputy District Attorney Andrew Lewis also asked for full restitution to reimburse authorities for the cost of investigating the hoax.

“Jay Leno said it best when he said, ‘This is copycat game.’ And people will copycat this event. [The Heenes] need to go to jail so people don’t do that,” Lewis said.

P. SOLOMON BANDA (AP)

MOBILE MELTDOWNS



Blackberry e-mail service in North America was restored for some users Wednesday morning following its second outage in less than a week. Research in Motion Ltd. apologized to its customers for the inconvenience and said the breakdown may have been caused by a flaw in its instant messaging software. (AP)

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December 30 at 10 a.m.
Kaiser Permanente Regional Office
2101 East Jefferson Street, Rockville, MD

December 31 at 10 a.m.
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In Brief

DUBLIN

Bishop to Resign Amid Child-Abuse Scandal

A second Roman Catholic bishop in Ireland announced Wednesday he will resign in the wake of a damning investigation into decades of church cover-up of child abuse in the Dublin archdiocese. Bishop Jim Moriarty revealed his decision to priests and other church officials in his diocese of Kildare and Leithlin, southwest of Dublin. Church officials said Moriarty planned to travel soon to Rome to tender his resignation directly to Pope Benedict XVI. (AP)



Shiite men take part in Wednesday's celebration of Ashoura in Karbala, Iraq.

BAGHDAD

Fatal Bombings Target Iraqi Christians, Shiites

Bombs targeted Iraqi Christians and Shiite Muslims Wednesday, killing at least eight people and wounding four dozen before coinciding religious observances that will take place under heavy guard. Security forces in recent days have been concerned that the Shiite holy observances known as Ashoura and Christmas gatherings would be targeted by large-scale attacks. (AP)

BEIJING

Reformist Faces 15 Years

A high-profile Chinese dissident accused of subversion was tried at a two-hour hearing Wednesday that shut out diplomats concerned over a case that reflects the communist government's suspicion of calls for reform. Liu Xiaobo was detained a year ago, just before the release of an appeal for more civil rights in China he co-authored. He faces up to 15 years in jail. The verdict is due Friday. (AP)



LLOYD ROBINSON/AP

Workers and investigators sift through debris surrounding the cracked fuselage of American Airlines flight 331, which skidded off the runway in Jamaica on Tuesday.

'Mass Chaos' on Jamaica Flight

No fatalities after plane skids off of the runway in Kingston

Washington

A team of U.S. air safety investigators was flying to Jamaica on Wednesday to help officials there determine how an American Airlines jetliner ended up on a beach after careening off the end of a Kingston runway.

Flight 331 originated from Ronald Reagan National Airport on Tuesday, stopped at Miami International, then headed into Kingston's Norman Manley Airport. The airplane, a Boeing 737-800, carried 160 people. American Airlines said there were no fatalities.



LLOYD ROBINSON/AP

A passenger from Flight 331 carries her baby to the airport on Tuesday.

Three passengers remained hospitalized Wednesday morning with injuries described as non-life threatening, according to an American Airlines spokesman. Dozens

Backstory

In the 14 years prior to 2008, there were 431 runway-related accidents involving commercial transport aircraft, about 30 percent of all airline accidents in that time period, according to the non-profit Flight Safety Foundation. Accidents that were designated as runway excursions — when an aircraft departs the end or side of the runway surface — accounted for 712 fatalities in the same 14-year period. (TWP)

of other passengers were treated for injuries before being released, including members of the six-person flight crew, officials said.

In searching for a cause of the

accident, aviation safety analysts say crash investigators may focus on the weather, the condition of the runway as well as the decision-making of pilots and air traffic controllers. It "looks like there were several weather-related issues: very heavy rain, poor visibility and a tail wind," said Henry Margusity, a meteorologist at Accuweather.com.

Margusity said there could have been layers of water on the runway causing the plane to hydroplane. "It was almost like being on ice," he said. "The passengers were basically along for the ride."

Kathy Estrada of Orlando, Fla., said her sister, Natalie Hendricks of Annapolis, was on the plane and reported "mass chaos."

SHOLNN FREEMAN AND MARTIN WEIL
(THE WASHINGTON POST)

Aide: Brazilian Family to Relinquish Child to American Father

Rio de Janeiro

A Brazilian family has decided to end its legal fight for custody of a 9-year-old boy and will obey a court order to turn him over to his U.S. father, an aide to the family's lawyer said Wednesday.

"It is certain the family will

not pursue any more legal channels," the aide to lawyer Sergio Tostes said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

The decision ends a five-year legal fight by David Goldman, of Tinton Falls, New Jersey, to regain custody of his son, Sean.

Earlier Wednesday, a federal

court in Rio ordered the family to relinquish Sean to Goldman by 9 a.m. Thursday.

U.S. Republican Rep. Chris Smith, of New Jersey, in Brazil to support Goldman, said Goldman's lawyers believe Brazil's federal police are authorized to physically remove the child from the family

if it does not meet the court deadline. He also said the international police agency Interpol had been notified to make sure Sean was not flown out of Brazil.

"David and his team are encouraged that the nightmare is coming to an end," Smith said. "No more delays. It's time to do this." (AP)

Protesters Clash With Iran Forces

Top dissident cleric's memorial ends with beatings, tear gas

Tehran, Iran

Security forces clashed with opposition protesters gathered Wednesday for a memorial for Iran's most senior dissident cleric, beating men and women and firing tear gas, reformist Web sites reported.

The gathering at the main mosque in the central city of Isfahan, 200 miles southeast of Tehran, was meant to honor Grand Ayatollah Hossein Ali Montazeri, the spiritual leader of the Iranian reformist movement who died Sunday.

His death set off large memorial ceremonies that turned into pro-opposition protests in defiance of a monthslong government crackdown on protesters rallying against the disputed June presidential elections. Iran has been in

Meanwhile ...

A daughter of Osama bin Laden has taken refuge in the Saudi Embassy in Tehran after eluding guards who have held her and five brothers under house arrest for eight years, a Saudi-owned newspaper reported Wednesday. It has long been believed that Iran has held in custody a number of bin Laden's children since they fled Afghanistan following the U.S.-led invasion of that country in 2001 — most notably Saad and Hamza bin Laden, who are thought to have held positions in al-Qaeda. (AP)

turmoil since the vote.

Top opposition leader Mir Hossein Mousavi, who was declared the loser in the June election, was sacked from his post at Iran's prestigious Art Academy after attending Montazeri's funeral. More than 50 people were arrested Wednesday in Isfahan, including pro-opposition cleric Masoud Adib. (AP)

Santa Puts on a Trunk Show



THAI SCHOOL CHILDREN at Jirasariwithaya School in Ayuttaya, Thailand, react to an elephant dressed as Santa on Wednesday. The tradition has been upheld for at least five years at the school, where almost all students are Buddhists.




TRADITIONS

A giant straw goat, erected annually since 1966 to mark the holidays, was burned down yet again early Wednesday in Gavle, Sweden, where torching it has become something of a Christmas tradition. Vandals have burned the 43-foot-high goat 24 times since it was first set up. It has also been smashed several times, run over by a car and had its legs cut off.

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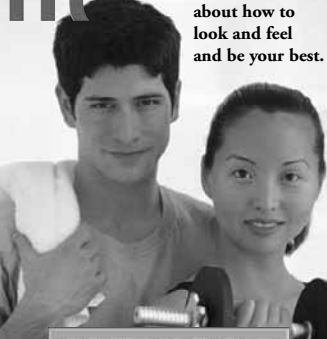
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(1)Based on 2009 Ward's Middle Sport Utility Vehicle segment. (2)Star ratings are part of the U.S. Department of Transportation's SaferCar.gov program (www.safercar.gov). (3)No system, no matter how sophisticated, can repeal the laws of physics or overcome careless driving actions. Performance is limited by available traction which snow, ice, and other conditions can affect. When the ESC warning lamp in the speedometer flashes, the driver needs to use less throttle and adapt speed and driving behavior to prevailing road conditions. Always drive carefully, consistent with conditions. Always wear your seatbelt. (4)Financing for well-qualified buyers. Not all buyers will qualify. Maintenance offer is in lieu of other incentives. See dealer for maintenance plan copy and full details. Offers end 1/4/10. (5)When properly equipped. (6)Based on 2009 Ward's Small Cross/Utility Vehicle segment. 2010 EPA est. 23 city/28 hwy when equipped with 4WD and 5-speed manual transmission. (7)When properly equipped. Based on Edmunds.com study conducted July 2009. (8)Wrangler: Amounts based on MSRP example with a 24B package, after application of \$750 consumer cash and \$500 lease loyalty cash allowance. Total due at lease signing is \$2,778 which includes a down payment of \$2,299 and first month's payment of \$229 and a security deposit of \$250. 36 monthly payments total \$8,252. Offer for well qualified returning Chrysler lessees requires an acquisition fee and dealer contribution which may affect final price. Tax title and license extra. Pay for excess wear and mileage of \$.20/mile for each mile over 12,000 miles per year. Option to buy at lease end at pre-negotiated price. Each participating dealer's actual terms may vary. Offer through GMAC. Not all lessees will qualify. Residency restrictions apply. Must take retail delivery by 1/4/10. Jeep and Sky Slider are registered trademarks of Chrysler Group LLC.

In Brief

ROCKVILLE, MD.

Montgomery College President Officially Out



Johnson

Montgomery College trustees announced this week they had accepted the resignation of President Brian K. Johnson, who had been on paid leave for three months after allegations of poor management and excessive spending. Board Chairman Michael C. Lin said Johnson had resigned effective Sept. 30 under a settlement. (THE WASHINGTON POST)

WASHINGTON

D.C. OKs Development Near Catholic University

D.C. officials have approved a major development project in the Brookland neighborhood near Catholic University. The city zoning commission gave the final OK Monday to Abdo Development's plans for stores, housing and restaurants on Michigan Avenue and Monroe Street in Washington. Plans also call for a public square, clock tower and college main street lined with other stores. (AP)

The Lotteries

Wednesday, Dec. 23

District	
Mid-day Lucky Numbers	2-3-1
Evening Lucky Numbers (Tues.)	8-9-5
Mid-day DC 4	7-1-5-1
Evening DC 4 (Tues.)	0-4-1-0
Mid-day D.C. Five	9-1-7-4-0
Evening D.C. Five (Tues.)	7-2-0-1-5
Daily 6 (Tues.)	4-10-13-23-31-35 (6)
Maryland	
Mid-day Pick 3	8-9-4
Evening Pick 3 (Tues.)	4-2-1
Mid-day Pick 4	8-8-8-4
Evening Pick 4 (Tues.)	8-8-4-3
Match 5 (Tues.)	8-19-20-21-27 (39)
Virginia	
Mid-day Pick 3	6-4-4
Evening Pick 3 (Tues.)	1-3-4
Mid-day Pick 4	4-1-2-3
Evening Pick 4 (Tues.)	4-7-7-6
Mid-day Cash 5	7-16-23-27-32
Evening Cash 5 (Tues.)	3-7-9-10-16

Multi-State Games

Mega Millions (Tues.)	3-33-35-39-45
Mega Ball	13

All winning numbers are official only when validated at a claims location. Drawings that occur after Express' deadline will be published two days later.

No Needles for Needle Program

D.C. anti-HIV unit broke despite \$1M in city funding since '07

Washington

Despite \$1 million in city AIDS funding over three years, the District's largest needle-exchange program is nearly out of cash and has been unable to supply clean syringes to intravenous drug users. The shortage comes after years of turmoil at Prevention Works,

which offers needle exchange at its Northeast Washington headquarters and from a mobile unit that sweeps the city's most drug-addled neighborhoods. "I am distraught," said Prevention Works Executive Director Philip Terry. "I am not happy that we're in this circumstance." For nearly a decade, Congress had banned the District from using government money to give addicts clean needles, even though intravenous drug use is blamed for helping to spread HIV in the District.

The ban was lifted in 2007, freeing the city to fund needle exchange at Prevention Works. At the time, it was the only program of its kind in the District. Just after Thanksgiving, however, Prevention Works learned it was out of rubber gloves, antibiotic ointment and diabetic needles, the needles of choice among addicts. There was no money for payroll or even for gas in the mobile unit. The agency's cash crunch had been simmering for months, with bills to consultants and vendors

unpaid and clients turned away without supplies, records and interviews show. Three employees said the agency ran out of biohazard containers over the summer, forcing staff to stash dirty syringes in bags and boxes. Terry said the agency is also expecting \$300,000 in private foundation money early next year, which should help the agency catch up. "We're going to keep this place going," Terry said. DEBBIE CENZIPER (THE WASHINGTON POST)

WashingtonPost.com



TORAN FELDER HUGS Victoria Dawson, center, as her daughter, Ellie LeBlanc, 11, admires their Christmas tree Wednesday. Felder, a Department of Public Works snow plow operator, delivered the tree and gifts to Dawson last Sunday when she was too snowed in to get out of her D.C. house. Felder said it "just felt like something I needed to do." | [washingtonpost.com/local](http://www.washingtonpost.com/local)



TRAVEL ADVISORY

The Virginia Department of Transportation will suspend most lane restrictions on all major highways and roads during the Christmas and New Year holidays. Lanes temporarily closed because of construction or maintenance work opened at noon Wednesday and will remain open through Sunday and then again from noon on Dec. 31 through Jan. 3. (AP)

Report: D.C. Blew \$5M on HDTV Studio

Washington

The District of Columbia's cable television office spent nearly \$5 million on a plan to build a high-definition television studio that was ultimately scrapped. The city's inspector general found that the office improperly awarded a sole-source contract to a startup.



Williams

The report questions why the administration of then-Mayor Anthony A. Williams was building an HDTV studio to broadcast government and educational events in the first place. The requirement by the Federal Communications Commission to broadcast in digital doesn't include a high-definition requirement.

Mason Production Services was paid \$1.4 million to design the new studio. The cable television office spent another \$3.5 million on equipment. The deal with Mason was scrapped after Mayor Adrian M. Fenty took office. (AP)

TRACY A WOODWARD/TWP



Eleven-year-old Galen Henderson, above, has been visiting Santa Claus at the Merrifield Garden Center since she was little. She and Madison Burns (right), also 11, are among a group of unapologetic late believers in Santa.

Seeing Is Believing

One area Santa's magic touch wins over even the biggest skeptics

Washington

Galen Henderson is 11 years old, and she believes in Santa Claus.

She is steadfast in this belief despite the taunts of other kids on the bus and in the cafeteria, who tell her he can't possibly be real; Santa is a big fat fraud in a red suit; how could he get all those presents out to every child in the world in one night?

"I hear it at school, mostly. I just say, 'Sure, if you think that, then you can think that,'" Galen said with an airy shrug.

She's certain they're wrong because she has met the real Santa at, of all places, a garden center in suburban Fairfax County. She's been going to see him every Christmas since she was little. Last year he remembered that her dog's name is Eli, and he brought her a Wii her family couldn't afford.

Her conviction is shared by other late believers — a small, but stubborn band of fourth-, fifth- and even sixth-graders who refuse to bow to

conventional wisdom on the question of Santa's existence. Like Galen, many of them eagerly wait in line for hours to see Santa at Merrifield Garden Center each Christmas, jockeying for space with toddlers and their parents in a garland-and-light festooned Santa House.

Santa has been appearing there for over 30 years and has a slavishly devoted cult following, with

"I want you to know that your best Christmases are before you, with your family and friends you haven't met yet."

— SANTA CLAUS' PARTING WORDS

many families returning every holiday. With a canny knack for intuiting a child's deepest desires and recalling details about their lives, he attracts late believers in droves. Their legs droop nearly to

the ground when they sit on his lap. Their scribbled wish lists go far beyond dolls and firetrucks to iPods and digital cameras.

Even the doubters find him difficult to resist.

Before Kate Nette, a 10-year-old from South Riding, sat on Santa's lap, she was full of skepticism. Earlier she'd dismissed him as "a guy in a suit who gets paid to be there." Then he asked how her field trip had been that day. As it happened, she had been on a field trip that day.

"Totally random," she told her cousin Daniel Nette, 12, afterward. Her doubt was wavering.

"Freaky," agreed Daniel. "Maybe he has elves that are spies." He eyed his mother, Janice. "Maybe you're one," he said.

Witnesses say that the Merrifield Santa appears not to have aged in 20 years (!) but is thoroughly modern. He tells children that his sleigh has GPS. He has a book out. Actually two: "St. Nicholas of the 21st Century" and "Santa's Notebook" — \$8

8 The traditional age children lose faith in Santa, polls say. But Charlotte Reznick a child educational psychologist and author of a book called "The Power of Your Child's Imagination," said she often meets late believers in her practice. "Just as there are children that grow up too fast, there are children who remain innocent for a while longer," Reznick said. And the parents often get in on the act "because adults like to believe childhood is a lovely, carefree time. And it's not." For example, Galen Henderson, 11, watched her financially-struggling parents put her childhood home in Falls Church up for sale this year. Given everything she's going through, said her mother, Diane, "Why not let her have the magic?"

on your way out. He exerts full creative control over the decor of the Santa House, filling it with snowmen and trees, an antique sleigh, and blue twinkle lights on the ceiling, like tiny stars.

The parents who bring their children to Merrifield know the drill. Toting sack dinners and their kids' homework assignments, they start lining up more than an hour before Santa appears in a jangle of bells. They sign the guest book — where Santa in crooked penmanship asks them to list "How many years visiting the Real Santa." The Fitzpatricks of Leesburg have been coming 35 years. The Sullivans of Herndon, 34.

After waiting nearly four hours, Galen finally made it to the front of the line. Santa seemed glad to see her. She showed him pictures of Eli, and then one of the dog before that. She presented her list. He waved off the purple Chuck Taylor high tops, but seemed OK with the nail polish set or a "New Moon" T-shirt. And maybe a chew bone for Eli.

Then he zinged her with a little speech he said he saves for all the late believers who visit him each year.

"You've been coming to see me a long time. I remember the first time you came to see me," he said. "Next year you probably won't come and see me anymore and that's OK. That's how life is. ... But I want you to know that your best Christmases are before you, with your family and friends you haven't met yet." **ANNIE GOWEN** (THE WASHINGTON POST)

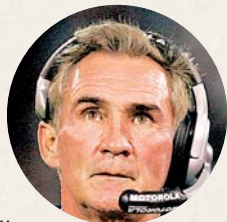
Dear Santa,

The Redskins were bad this year. Naughty? Not exactly. More like restless, disjointed and, at times, embarrassing. It wasn't that they had evil intensions, though they did sue some of their beloved fans. But when you're equally bad at planning and executing, it's hard to get sympathy. With new GM Bruce Allen in place and Dan Snyder's wallet at our disposal, we offer a wish list for presents that might win fans back after an awful year. **ERIC BRANDNER**



1 A New Coach

Jim Zorn's first head coaching job may have been accidental. It was certainly premature. But the surprise Plan B choice two years ago is likely headed out. So who do the Redskins want next? People are talking about Mike Shanahan's arrival as though it's a done deal. Whoever becomes the new leader will need to bring a decisive style to a team that has some talent but lacks a unified personality.



2 A New Quarterback

This may be a case of being careful what you ask for. As the stats show, Campbell is not a bad quarterback. He's been hindered by linemen who can't protect him and receivers who've been slow to learn. If Campbell stays — and there is little indication that he will — fans may see a quarterback battle in training camp. But with a few highly rated arms on the board and a potential top 10 pick in the offing, it may be hard for a new-look front office to pass up a quarterback come April.



3 A New Offensive Line

This could be Nos. 1 through 5 on the list. Injuries to Chris Samuels, above, and Randy Thomas have left Campbell at the mercy of a group of backups, who allowed the Giants to crush the quarterback Monday night. The Redskins passed on offensive lineman in last year's draft in favor of standout defender Brian Orakpo. They'll have no such luxury this time.



4 A solution At Tailback

Clinton Portis may be the most identifiable Redskin, but he's made little difference over the last two seasons. If the Redskins were to cut him and his high salary, they'd likely have to start from scratch at the position, as longtime back-up Ladell Betts is facing a lengthy rehab after a leg injury. Picking up a back late in the draft, or a few rookie free agents, is a likely option.



5 One More Impact Defender

This would be a luxury, but also something that could turn the Redskins defense from a solid unit into a game-changing group. The most ideal spot for a new and notable defender would be at cornerback. But another quality starting linebacker — even if it's just to free up Orakpo to play his more natural defensive end role — could make for an intriguing addition.

TV Lineup



LeBron James and the Cavs face Kobe Bryant and the Lakers on Christmas.

Thursday

8 P.M. 'Twas the night before Christmas and the only game stirring was Nevada vs. SMU in the Hawaii Bowl. ESPN

Friday

NOON Dwyane Wade and the Miami Heat hope to wrap up a victory against the New York Knicks. ESPN

2:30 P.M. The Celtics hope to stuff Dwight Howard and the Magic. ABC

5 P.M. Just as sure as Rudolph's nose is red, Kobe Bryant faces Shaquille O'Neal yet again on Christmas when the Lakers host the Cavaliers. ABC

7:30 P.M. The Chargers won't be home for Christmas when visiting the Tennessee Titans. NFL Network

8 P.M. The Clippers look to play the Grinch against the Suns, followed the Nuggets and Trailblazers offering a final serving of NBA action. ESPN

Saturday

4:30 P.M. North Carolina faces Pittsburgh in the Meineke Car Bowl. ESPN

7 P.M. The Capitals try to avoid being shutout by the great Martin Brodeur and the New Jersey Devils. CSN

8 P.M. Flip Saunders leads the Wizards against his old team: the Minnesota Timberwolves. CSN+

8 P.M. USC can take out a season's full of angst against Boston College in the Emerald Bowl. ESPN

Sunday

1 P.M. The Baltimore Ravens aim to keep their playoff hopes alive against the Pittsburgh Steelers. CBS

8:15 P.M. How will the Redskins follow up their stink bomb against the Giants when playing the Cowboy? NBC

REUNIONS

Nick Johnson has returned to the New York Yankees, finalizing a \$5.5 million, one-year contract.

Johnson, who was the Washington Nationals' starting first baseman for four years, began his career in New York and spent three years with the Yankees before he was traded to Montreal after the 2003 season in the deal that brought pitcher Javier Vazquez to the Yankees for the first time. (AP)



Wright, Hoyas Bounce Back

Guard nets 34 points in return to the win column vs. Harvard

Hoyas Hoops

Chris Wright scored a career-high 34 points, Greg Monroe added 16 points and 16 rebounds, and No. 14 Georgetown used a half-ending 11-0 run to break open a tight game and beat Harvard 86-70 Wednesday, avoiding a second consecutive loss.

Wright is the first Georgetown player to reach 30 in a game since Jeff Green hit that mark against Notre Dame in the Big East tournament in March 2007.

Georgetown and Harvard were tied at 33 with 3½ minutes left in the first half before the Hoyas took control at both ends of the court to go up 44-33 at halftime.

Austin Freeman scored 21 for Georgetown (9-1), which was playing its first game since its first setback of the season, a 61-57 loss to Old Dominion on Saturday.

Harvard (7-3) was led by Jeremy Lin's 15 points. He made his



Chris Wright is the first Hoya to score at least 30 points since Jeff Green in 2007.

first six shot attempts but missed his other four.

Wright, a 6-foot-1 junior guard from Bowie, Md., shot 13 for 21 and had six rebounds and four assists. His previous best for Georgetown was 28 points against Syracuse last season.

Against Harvard, Wright scored 21 of his points in the second half before heading to the sideline for good with 1:15 left and the game's outcome clear.

Wright made quite a turnaround from the Old Dominion defeat, when he scored only four points and shot 2 for 8.

That upset came at the Hoyas' tiny on-campus McDonough Arena. On Wednesday, Georgetown was back at the usual site of its home games, Verizon Center, and the Hoyas extended their winning streak there against non-conference opponents to 22 games.

Harvard, meanwhile, was coming off a two-week layoff since a victory over Boston College on Dec. 9. In its game before that, the Ivy League school also tested Top 25 team Connecticut, losing by six on Dec. 6. **HOWARD FENDRICH (AP)**

In Brief



Brett Favre and Vikings coach Brad Childress said they have cleared the air.

PRO FOOTBALL

Favre: Dispute Is Over

Brett Favre is brushing aside his conflict with Minnesota coach Brad Childress. Childress said he had a "good talk" with his quarterback on both Monday and Wednesday about their disagreement during Sunday's loss to Carolina. Favre says the dispute — stemming from the coach's idea to bench the quarterback — is resolved and that he and Childress have communicated well this year. **(AP)**

BASEBALL

Glaus, Braves Reach Deal

The power-hungry Atlanta Braves are hoping longtime third baseman Troy Glaus can fill the team's void at first base. The Braves have reached a preliminary agreement on a one-year contract with Troy Glaus, a source told The Associated Press on Wednesday. **(AP)**

BOXING

Pacquiao-Mayweather Match Is in Jeopardy

The promoter for boxing sensation Manny Pacquiao says a fight against Floyd Mayweather Jr. will not happen unless Mayweather's camp drops its insistence for Olympic-style blood testing. Promoter Bob Arum says if that doesn't happen by Thursday, the proposed March 13 fight that would have likely been the richest ever in boxing is over. **(AP)**

PRO FOOTBALL

Westbrook OK'd to Play

Eagles running back Brian Westbrook was cleared to play after recovering from two concussions and is expected to return against the Denver Broncos at home Sunday. **(AP)**

HONORS



Michael Vick's peers appreciate his tough journey back to the NFL. Vick won the Ed Block Courage Award, voted on by his teammates on the Philadelphia Eagles, after the once-disgraced star quarterback returned to the league after spending 18 months in prison for his role in a dogfighting ring. "I've overcome a lot, more than probably one single individual can handle or bear," he said. **(AP)**

Steroids Is AP's Top Sports Story

Polls

The dark shadow that performance-enhancing drugs continue to cast on baseball was chosen as the sports Story of the Year by members of The Associated Press, even surpassing the Tiger Woods sex scandal.

Some of the biggest names in the game — Alex Rodriguez, Manny Ramirez and David "Big Papi" Ortiz — were linked to performance-enhancing drugs this year, which swayed editors to pick the steroid scandal over Woods' fall from grace.

"The impact that that story had made it the story of the year," said Lance Hanlin, sports editor of the Beaufort (S.C.) Gazette and The



Alex Rodriguez admitted to using steroids before winning the World Series.

(Hilton Head) Island Packet.

In fact, the Woods scandal finished fifth in the top story voting. Jimmie Johnson's historic fourth straight NASCAR championship was second, followed by Roger

Federer winning his 15th Grand Slam and Brett Favre ending his (second) retirement to lead the Minnesota Vikings to the division title.

This year's balloting was unusual in that a major story — Woods' accident on Nov. 27 and the salacious revelations that followed — happened after voting had started.

By then, 37 of 161 ballots had been submitted by editors at U.S. newspapers which are members of the AP. The voters were asked to rank the top 10 sports stories of the year, with the first-place story getting 10 points, the second-place story receiving nine points, and so on. **NANCY ARMOUR (AP)**

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on the spot

It may be well known and much loved, but C.S. Lewis' fictional collection of demonic correspondence, "The Screwtape Letters," doesn't immediately appear to be fit for the stage. Max McLean, who stars in (as the titular devilish writer) and helped adapt the theatrical version of Lewis' famed epistolary novel, knows better.

What attracted you to "The Screwtape Letters"?
I read the book in my early 20s and I said, "Oh, I know this guy." Jeff Fisk saw me do a solo production of the Book of Genesis about eight years ago. He liked it, and I got an e-mail from him the next day that said, "I think you would make a great Screwtape." I didn't know whether that was a compliment or not, but that got a conversation going because it never occurred to me that it could be a theater piece.

Was it a challenge to adapt?
Yes it was, and we made many mistakes. "Screwtape" has had a pretty long journey — today it's December of '09, and we started in the spring of '05. Most people read "The Screwtape Letters" as a "bite-and-chew" book — you know, you sit with a glass of port, read a page, think about it and go on to the next page. What happens, though, is you miss the story that's buried within there, which is simply a senior demon instructing a junior demon on how to hunt down, trap and finally devour a human soul that recently converted to Christianity.

The play takes place in hell. How do you stage that?
We have a little corner office in hell. The set designer, Cameron Anderson, had spent some time in the catacombs the summer before we hired her. She found some images there that really resonated with



JONNY KNIGHT AND JERRY GOODSTEIN

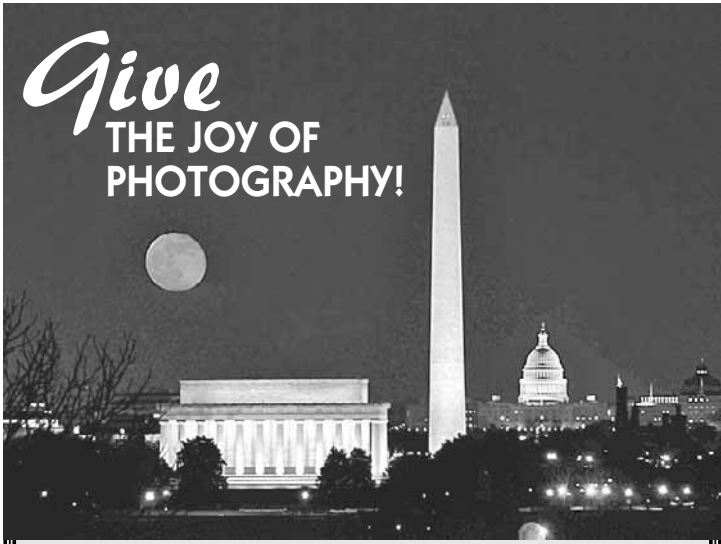
Max McLean
STAR OF 'THE SCREWTAPE LETTERS'

"Most people read 'The Screwtape Letters' as a bite-and-chew book. ... [But] you miss the story that's buried within there."

her, and she put this thing with skulls and bones up on the wall and on the floor. Of course, if the idea is to hunt and eat, that would be the remains of hunting and eating. That was the basic set design, and then we had these lavish costumes because there's this element of the idea of pride — Screwtape is all drama and glitz.

How have non-churchgoing folks responded to the piece?
Well, they keep coming. **RYAN LITTLE**

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Getting Political, With a Wink

Yinka Shonibare's art skewers current and past colonialism

Museum

Spanning three galleries, two floors and 14 years of Yinka Shonibare's career, the exhibition of the British-born Nigerian artist's work at the National Museum of African Art is an exercise in challenging the status quo.

Shonibare uses media including painting — often employing Dutch wax fabric, a symbolic representation of the racial and economic relationship among Europe, Asia and Africa

— sculpture, mixed-media installations, photography and film.

With much wit and sex appeal, the artistic rebel visually arrests the eyes and forces the viewer to (re)consider the effect of British colonialism on the African aesthetic and social identity.

In 2005, Shonibare was awarded the title of Member of Order of the British Empire, or MBE. The artist treats this honor as a colonialist twist in his own story, cheekily seeming to clutch at its dignity by referring to himself as that award's recipient throughout the show — its very title is "Yinka Shonibare MBE."

There is plenty of room for interpretation in these works, which are



"Children on a Globe" features one of the artist's tropes — headless figures.

JUAN ARIAS/FTWP

passionate and playful. He favors headless sculptures — figures in vivid 19th-century garb in compromising positions, or seated around a table inlaid with a map of the continent in a piece titled "Scramble for Africa." Shonibare does include his own face, at once prideful and circumspect, in the photographic series, "Dorian Gray."

This immersive show is as beautiful as it is thought-provoking, but enter at your own risk — it's impossible to avoid the deep end.

DARONA WILLIAMS (EXPRESS)

● **National Museum of African Art**, 950 Independence Ave. SW; through March 7; 202-633-4600. (Smithsonian)

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The Kennedy Center





Roger Bart is the titular mad scientist, Cory English plays Igor (please call him Eye-gore), and Anne Horak plays the comely Inga.

Green, Mean Laugh Machine

'Young Frankenstein' (or Fronkensteen?) puts on the ritz at the Kennedy Center

Stage

The Monster barely utters a recognizable word from opening curtain to the final scene, but Broadway veteran Shuler Hensley claims that playing the creature at the center of "Young Frankenstein" has been one of the toughest and most enriching roles of his career.

"It's Acting 101, is what I like

to call it — in the best sense. In that I have maybe five lines to say and one page of music to sing in the whole thing, but everything is about reacting and listening," said Hensley, who originated the role on Broadway.

"Young Frankenstein," which opened a touring stint at the Kennedy Center last week, puts a musical spin on the silly, classic 1974 Mel Brooks film of the same name. (Although the film had some song and dance in it — we'll get to that — the stage version is a true musical.) As with "The Producers," Brooks wrote the book for the stage adap-

tation with Thomas Meehan, and the pair stay faithful to the college-campus favorite, which starred Gene Wilder (who co-wrote it with Brooks) as Dr. Frederick Frankenstein and Peter Boyle as the sensitive-souled but brute-bodied Monster.

Still grounded as a sexually charged parody of the old Universal horror films, "Young Frankenstein" follows a similar plot structure, has most of the same characters and features subtle and not-so-subtle nods to the film's most iconic scenes.

Roger Bart, who's appeared on Broadway, television and in film, is the titular doctor — a surgeon

who, upon the death of his grandfather, returns to the family castle in Transylvania Heights to settle his family's affairs.

The elder Dr. Victor von Frankenstein's experiments with bringing the dead to life made him an outcast there, and cause Frederick Frankenstein to shun his family name — insisting it be pronounced "Fronkensteen" — for fear of being called a madman.

After meeting the persua-

ster's body and, really, his first moment of happiness and being able to shine comes from dance," Hensley said.

Several of the film's other famous scenes appear throughout — some accentuated by the musical format, others simply interpreted onstage. A crowd favorite is the scene in which the Monster stumbles into the home of a blind hermit, who was praying for a visitor. Washington native Brad Oscar,

Still grounded as a sexually charged parody of the Universal horror films, the stage "Young Frankenstein" features nods to the film's most iconic scenes.

sive Igor, the grandson of Victor von Frankenstein's assistant (played masterfully by Cory English), and delving into his grandfather's experiments, Frederick Frankenstein decides he will create his own monster. He succeeds in bringing life to a dead body, but it winds up a disaster after Igor drops the brain the good doctor had intended to use, replacing it with one labeled "Abby Normal." The Monster escapes, and chaos — as expected — ensues.

Like Hensley, Bart originated the role when it premiered on Broadway in 2007 and until it closed in January, giving the pair an exceptional chemistry together — especially in the iconic song-and-dance number from the film, "Puttin' on the Ritz," expanded here to truly serve the musical format as the show's funniest laugh-out-loud moment.

"Obviously, it's a gas," Bart said. "I never did 'Rocky Horror Picture Show,' but I imagine it's the same kind of thrill. ... Shuler is really funny in it, and it's really fun to the audience; they get really excited, and I'm always surprised for the gasp it elicits."

It's a pivotal moment for the Monster when we realize he's not the villain but a mere child — albeit a green, 7-foot tall one.

"It's really a moment where the audience can relate to the Monster or get the fact that he's an outsider ... an innocent caught in a mon-

ster's body and, really, his first moment of happiness and being able to shine comes from dance," Hensley said.

"It's just a little piece of gold where an actor you know that you have to go out there and play that scene, you don't have to work hard to make it work and you don't have to do anything more than it actually is because its structurally and comedically sound," said Oscar, who doubles as Inspector Kemp.

"What's hilarious to me is that I have never played a scene with another actor where I do not look at the actor. ... I do the whole scene looking six inches to his left or right, so it reads that I am indeed blind."

But it's English as Igor who steals most of the scenes he's in — often overtly breaking the fourth wall, a Brooks trademark.

"He's the crazy one in it," Shuler said. "It's funny, because you think the Monster and Dr. Frankenstein are, but the Monster, for the most part, is the straight guy the whole show, which is another Mel Brook-sian thing. And Igor, he's designed where he gets to come out of his character, and based on how he's feeling that day there will be a lot of ad libs that are freeing for him to do." **RUDI GREENBERG (EXPRESS)**

• Kennedy Center, 2700 F St. NW; through Jan. 10, \$37-\$150; 202-467-4600, Kennedy-center.org. (Foggy Bottom-GWU)



RACHEL BECKMAN

A wide audience can relate to the personal and political issues Judy Gold raises with candid humor in "Mommy Queerest."

The Gold Standard

Comedian Judy Gold is a lesbian Jewish mother — yep, her family's just like yours

Stage

Judy Gold is not shy. She makes her opinions known during her frequent visits to "The View," and she spent years working behind the scenes on "The Rosie O'Donnell Show." Her newest performance piece, "Mommy Queerest," uses humor and music to tell the true story of her life as a Jewish lesbian with two kids. Her situation may be unusual, but anyone can appreciate her highly entertaining take on families and parenting.

What made you decide to perform such a personal piece?

I just think I'm ready, and I'm so angry about gay marriage and the fact that my family is not treated the same as other families by the government that I pay taxes to.

Given that most audience members are probably not queer Jewish mothers, were there any challenges in making this piece resonate?

It's amazing, because people come

up to me after the shows and tell me, "Your life is just like mine. My mother is exactly like your mother." You know, family is family. No one has the perfect life, and no one has the prototype of perfection.

Is it a challenge to tackle serious issues with comedy?

There's nothing that isn't a joke to me; it's my default setting. I feel like humor is the most palatable way to deal with these kinds of issues. You can really make an incredible statement and make people laugh. That's why George Carlin and Richard Pryor were so amazing — you left their shows with something.

How have people responded to your work?

It's been amazing. The thing is, everyone in this world knows and loves a gay person, whether or not they know it or want to admit it. Whether it be someone they work with, a relative, a distant relative, a friend, a friend's child — you come in contact with a gay person every day. That's why it's so important to be out, to be open and to be honest. If someone leaves my show

“Family is family. No one has the perfect life, and no one has the prototype of perfection.”

and says, "I'm gay," or "It's OK that you're gay," that would be the greatest thing that could happen.

How do you balance comedy, activism and parenthood?

I really don't. I was a half-hour late and I'm making salmon for the kids right now. It's called multitasking and wanting to kill yourself.

What do you want your audiences to come away with?

I want them to have a great time and be entertained. I want them to leave going, "You know, next time I have the chance to vote for gay marriage, I'm going to vote for it." **RYAN LITTLE**

• *Theater J, 1529 16th St. NW; through Jan. 3, \$30-\$55; 202-518-9400, Theaterj.org. (Dupont Circle)*

Duo Dynamics

Baltimore two-piece Wye Oak brings the noise to gentle folk

Music

On their newest CD, "The Knot," the Baltimore noise-folk duo Wye Oak blends delicate melodies with arrangements that explode. It's a stylistic idea that would never have come about had they been a conventional band, says lead singer and songwriter Jenn Wasner.

"There's a lot of big jumps in volumes and bursts of feedback," Wasner says. "That's because when we play with just the two of us, there are only so many things we can do in an arrangement."

Wye Oak's two-person setup is also responsible for the sound of their two atmospheric CDs. The pair will often start a recording without a clear idea of how it will end up when they add more instruments: "The sound evolves as we're going," explains drummer/key-boardist Andy Stack.

When the Merge Records-



COURTESY MERGE RECORDS

Andy Stack and Jenn Wasner let their style emerge from their limitations.

signed band plays the Black Cat on Sunday, it will concentrate on its newest CD, "The Knot," a sophomore effort that Wasner says marks the band's real start.

"It was crafted intentionally to be a collection of like songs, thematically and sonically, where [the first CD] 'If Children' was kind of just a recording project," Wasner says. **TONY SCLAFANI**

• *Black Cat, 1811 14th St. NW; with Scripts; Sun., 9 p.m., \$10; 800-551-7328, Blackcatdc.com. (U St.-Cardozo)*

Keys of Kingdom



CHEUNG CHING-MING

REINVENTION: Beginning on Saturday, pianist and jazz legend Ahmad Jamal settles in at Blues Alley for a five-night stretch of boundary-pushing music. He'll also appear with the Keter Betts Memorial Trio on New Year's Eve.

The Many Ages of Youth

Stephen Kellogg and the Sixers use their maturity to explore the lives of young folk

Music

“The Bear,” Stephen Kellogg’s new album with his backing band the Sixers, is all about generations, a topic that has obvious roots in his own life.

“I feel like I’m smack in the middle of adolescence,” says the thirtysomething musician, who started his first band as a teenager. “I’m here with my two kids, but I still call my parents for advice. So I’m totally someone’s child, totally someone’s parent.”

That sense of in-between-ness informed not only the songs he wrote for the album, but the sequencing as well. With its balance of ’70s country rock and a modern sensibility, “The Bear” begins with songs about youth, such as “Dying Wish of a Teenager” and culminates with songs set



Stephen Kellogg, center, leads his band, the Sixers, in an adventurous study of what it means to be young on the CD “The Bear.”

in old age, in particular the closer “Born in the Spring.”

If this is a deeply personal album for Kellogg, it’s also the

Sixers’ rawest and most adventurous to date, the result of a growing confidence onstage — the band tours almost constantly — and in

the studio. After bouncing among major labels, the Sixers decided to shake things up a bit. “It was our first endeavor to take some chance

“I feel like I’m smack in the middle of adolescence. ... I’m totally someone’s child, totally someone’s parent.”

es and not be afraid to fall on our face,” he explains.

“We just weren’t as scared as we were on previous records. When you get your first record deal, you think it’s your only shot and you can’t mess it up. And then you get another shot and you think you still can’t mess it up. We lived that way for a long time, but for this record we decided to make music from our hearts and see what happens.”

The band’s maturity has produced an album that sounds urgent and impassioned — in other words, young. “We’re not a new band,” Kellogg says. “We keep going because we love what we’re doing.”

STEPHEN M. DEUSNER

● 9:30 Club, 815 V St. NW; with the Alternate Routes, Sat., 8 p.m., \$15; 800-955-5566, 930.com. (U St.-Cardozo)

Party With Riche Kids

Local DJ collective the Nouveau Riche keeps ’em dancing

Out & About

Where can you go in D.C. to watch people dance as if they’ve just won the lottery?

The aptly named “Nouveau Riche” monthly dance party at D.C. 9 nightclub. The eclectic mix of house, hip-hop and pop music has kept dancers on their feet (or spinning on hands/elbows/heads — the night is known to get a little rowdy) since 2007. The DJ collective of Gavin Holland, SteveLove (Steve Bock) and Nacey (Andrew



Rich in passion and beats, the DJs get dance floors frenzied at DC9 every month.

Wallace) is working on an EP of the Riche’s greatest mixes, remixes and original works to release in the upcoming months.

“It’s a chance to show off both

our own music as well as the best tracks we’ve heard recently from around the world,” says Holland.

Holland met Bock glancing at each other’s iPod selections while

running side by side on the treadmills at XM Satellite Radio’s company gym. After bringing in local DJ Wallace, the guys created an all-genre-embracing style, everything from European house from the ’80s mixed with Snoop Dogg hits mixed with ... whatever tracks the DJs deem fit. “Because people genuinely enjoy the music, that gives us the freedom to play stuff that’s new and mind-blowing as well as familiar, classic tunes,” says Holland.

From the start, the Nouveau Riche has been a friend-based operation. “We’ve built the night up as something that we and our friends look forward to all month — that energy is a big part of the equation,” says Bock. ROBYN MINCHER

● DC 9, 1940 9th St. NW; Sat., 10 p.m., \$8, Dc9.com. (U St.-Cardozo)

Been Green



THAT LOOKS ... HEALTHY: “Naked Ambition” takes the glossy, airbrushed fruits of PETA’s “I’d Rather Go Naked Than Wear Fur” campaign and showcases the photographs, courtesy of Govinda Gallery.

indies & arties

FOCUS FEATURES/WILSON WEBB

Tony Award nominee **Michael Stuhlbarg** stars in the Coens' "A Serious Man."

Let's Get 'Serious'

The end of the year is a time to look back, so taking in a screening of the new Joel and Ethan Coen film might be just the nostalgia-inducing event the not-so-sentimental film fan requires. "A Serious Man" is set in 1967 and follows the spiritual angst of Larry Gopnik (Michael Stuhlbarg) as he struggles with family and work problems in the midst of a religious crisis. Faith, free will and the price of righteousness are debated with tenderness and sanity in this lovely, underseen gem. ▶ *AFI Silver, 8633 Colesville Road, Silver Spring; through Jan. 21; 301-495-6700, Afi.com/silver.* (Silver Spring)

Sayles Call

Before indies were called indies, and when revival houses still competed with art houses for the popcorn bucks of cineastes, there was John Sayles. The director's early work was funny, satiric, warmhearted and somber around the edges — pre-snark, pre-irony. The National Gallery of Art gives this American auteur his due as part of Recovered Treasure: UCLA's Festival of Preservation film series. On Saturday, relax from the holiday hoopla with a double dose of low-key magic: the 1984 hit "Brother From Another Planet" (at 1 p.m.) and the 1980 film that launched Sayles' career, "The Return of the Secaucus Seven" (3:30 p.m.). ▶ *National Gallery of Art, 400 Constitution Ave. NW; Sat., free; 202-842-6799, Nga.gov.* (Archives-Navy Memorial)

American Muscle in the USSR

An adventure serial from the silent era gave the Soviet people what they wanted

DVD

Intrepid newspaper reporters dash to prevent a massive biological attack! Not in a new Hollywood film, but an old Soviet one from 1926 with Americans as the heroes.

Don't worry; it makes more sense once you read the booklet included with the newly remastered DVD set of "Miss Mend" (Flicker Alley, \$29.96). Billed as "An Adventure Serial in Three Parts," the four-hour epic was part of a short-lived Soviet attempt to give the proletariat what they really wanted: nonstop American-style action.

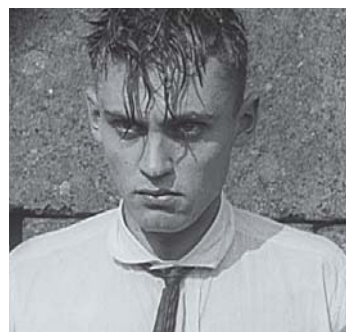
On that level, "Mend" clearly succeeds: There's an impressively staged fistfight or chase scene every few minutes, and you have to won-



Silent-film emoting and nonstop action drive the adventure serial "Miss Mend."

der if the working title was "Ships, Trains and Automobiles."

As it is, the title character is a



PHOTOS COURTESY FLICKER ALLEY

single mom and typist at the "Rockefeller" factory who, along with her muckraking male pals, discovers

a plot by evil capitalists to spread plague germs using Soviet radio antennas. Melodrama ensues.

Eisenstein this ain't, although one scene of a huge stone staircase is presumably a reference to the director's 1925 masterpiece, "Battleship Potemkin." German Expressionism gets several shout-outs: One character rises "Nosferatu"-style out of a coffin, and the evil scientist Chiche is a semi-parody of Dr. Caligari. But what "Miss Mend" is most is escapism; the ham-handed propaganda elements vanish quickly, as if the filmmakers had filled a quota and moved on. Once the action moves to the USSR, we see street urchins, hardly typical of a workers' paradise.

Given all this, it's hardly surprising the Soviet press deemed the film vulgar. But in their defense, it is tough to picture a reporter saying, "I cross the ocean to save an entire country and what stops me? An enema!" **PAUL STELTER**

Take 10

THE WASHINGTON POST'S FILM CRITICS TACKLE THIS WEEK'S BOX-OFFICE TOP 10



TWENTIETH CENTURY FOX

1 Avatar

As director James Cameron proved with 1997's "Titanic," he has a penchant for melding spectacle and old-fashioned storytelling. With "Avatar," Cameron creates a seamless journey between the realistic and imagined world — it's an ambitious, fully immersive cinematic experience. **ANN HORNADAY**

2 The Princess and the Frog

This is a triumph on every one of the myriad levels it has been asked to succeed. **ANN HORNADAY**

3 The Blind Side

This character-driven drama has a straightforward lack of cheap sentiment. **ANN HORNADAY**

4 Did You Hear About the Morgans?

Hugh Grant and Sarah Jessica Parker star a dreary exercise in foregone conclusions. **MICHAEL O'SULLIVAN**

5 The Twilight Saga: New Moon

Despite melodrama, there's enough wolf whistle in this sexy, scary romp to please anyone. **MICHAEL O'SULLIVAN**

6 Invictus

Clint Eastwood's absorbing, inspiring movie features a great performance

from Morgan Freeman as Nelson Mandela. **ANN HORNADAY**

7 Disney's A Christmas Carol

The holiday classic gets a manic makeover that is antic, scary, sweet and slightly soulless. **MICHAEL O'SULLIVAN**

8 Up in the Air

George Clooney stars in this timeless movie that's utterly of its time. **ANN HORNADAY**

9 Brothers

"Brothers" uses the fallout from one man's actions to explore how he — and we — injured ourselves through fighting wars. **MICHAEL O'SULLIVAN**

10 Old Dogs

John Travolta and Robin Williams phone it in for this alleged comedy. **JOHN ANDERSON**

Weekend Pass | entertainment

top stops WEEKEND



CHIP SOMDEVILLA/GETTY IMAGES

1

Humble Glow

The National Christmas Tree on the Ellipse gets all the attention, but that hubcap-plated, light-netted attention queen is just a flashy, empty mannequin covered in fragrant pine needles. Meanwhile, Cinderella — aka the Capitol Christmas Tree — is scrubbing floors in the corner and looking fabulous. Visit this modestly scaled blue spruce for an instant shot of patriotic holiday cheer.

→ West Lawn of the U. S. Capitol between Constitution & Independence avenues.

2 A Yule That's Cool

Between her exotic good looks, sultry voice and excellent taste, Goapele should by rights be a huge star. But we cultish fans are content to have this neo-soul wunderkind to ourselves for now. The Bay

Area singer can slide from sharply political to mellowly romantic to unabashedly heart-breaking, but her gorgeous voice and mesmerizing charisma are in control no matter what tone she's rocking. Catch her on Sunday at Bohemian Caverns.

→ **Bohemian Caverns**, 2001 11th St. NW; Sun., 7 p.m., \$20; 202-299-0800, Bohemiancaverns.com. (U St.-Cardozo)



3 A Scarily White Christmas

Children who are all "Nutcracker"-ed out may appreciate a wintry theater experience of a different sort. Synetic Family Theater's typically ravishing treatment of Hans Christian Andersen's "Snow Queen" will set wee jaded hearts a-thrill.

→ **Synetic Family Theater**, 4041 Campbell Ave., Arlington; through Jan. 10, \$12; 800-494-8497.



4 Something for Everyone

In a melting pot society, what could be more Christmassy than a vaudeville-style variety show featuring klezmer and Cajun music and magic? The Kennedy Center's Millennium Stage brings it all together on Sunday with Cajun cellist Sean Grissom, the Alexandria Klezmet and magician Mark Mitton. Oy, presto, y'all!

→ **Kennedy Center, Millennium Stage**, 4600 F St. NW; Sun., 6 p.m., free; 202-467-4600, Kennedy-center.org. (Foggy Bottom-GWU)



RICHARD A. LIPSKI/TWIP

5 Don't Pass the Buck-Buck

Artist Koen Vanmechelen shouldn't look so circumspect — "The Cosmopolitan Chicken Project" was his idea, after all. The exhibition featuring photography, video, painting, installation and live chickens is playful, solemn, thought-provoking and very, weirdly beautiful.

→ **Conner Contemporary**, 1358-60 Florida Ave. NE; through Dec. 31; 202-588-8750, Connercontemporary.com.

the scene

Sound

THURSDAY

Black Cat: The James Brown Death-mas Holiday Bash, 9 p.m., \$5.

DC9: Julian Velard, Jonah Smith, Bess Rogers, 8:30 p.m., \$10.

Jammin' Java: Good for the Jews with Rob Tannenbaum and David Fagin, 7 p.m., \$20.

Twins Jazz: Markov Jazz Process, 9 & 11 p.m., \$10.

FRIDAY

Black Cat: Mousetrap, 9:30 p.m., \$10 (backstage).

DC9: Liberation Dance Party with Andy Rourke, 9 p.m., \$8.

Kennedy Center, Millennium Stage: All-Star Christmas Day Jazz Jam, 6 p.m., free.

Rock and Roll Hotel: W. W. J. Drink Dance Party with DJ Majr, 10 p.m., free.

Velvet Lounge: DJ Goldman & Hon-estlee, 9 p.m., free.

SATURDAY

9:30 Club: Stephen Kellogg and the Six-ers, the Alternate Routes, 8 p.m., \$15.

Birchmere: Pieces of a Dream, 7:30 p.m., \$35.

Black Cat: Bliss Dance Party, 9:30 p.m., \$8.

Blues Alley: Ahmad Jamal, 8 & 10 p.m., \$40.

DC9: Nouveau Riche, 9 p.m., \$8.

HR-57: Thad Wilson Quartet, 9 p.m., \$12.

Iota: Justin Trawick Group, 9 p.m., \$12.

Jammin' Java: Hotspur, Citizen, Find Vienna, 6 p.m., \$13; X-Mas Smash Bash, 9:30 p.m., \$12.

Rock and Roll Hotel: Gist, Yell County, the Courtesans, Ximena, 9 p.m., \$10; DJ Metaphysical, 9:30 p.m., free.

State Theatre: Soja, 5 & 9:30 p.m., \$25.

Twins Jazz: Elijah Jamal Experience, \$15.

Velvet Lounge: Kingpin Soundsystem, 9 p.m., free.

SUNDAY

Black Cat: Wye Oaks, Scripts, 9 p.m., \$10 (backstage).

Continued on E10

Weekend Pass

It's Warm Inside



SHERVIN LAINEZ

STRONG ROOTS: Honky-tonk funk gets mixed for the masses when the Justin Trawick Group takes the stage. The hardworking D.C. outfit has stayed busy around town and will turn the temperature up a notch at Iota on Saturday.

venues

→ **9:30 CLUB:** 815 V ST. NW; 202-265-0930, 930.COM.
→ **BIRCHMERE:** 3701 MT. VERNON AVE., ALEXANDRIA; 703-549-7500, BIRCHMERE.COM.
→ **BLACK CAT:** 1811 14TH ST. NW; 202-667-7960, BLACKCATDC.COM.
→ **BLUES ALLEY:** 1073 WISCONSIN AVE. NW; 202-337-4141, BLUESALLEY.COM.
→ **BOHEMIAN CAVERNS:** 2001 11TH ST. NW; 202-299-0800, BOHEMIANCAVERNS.COM.
→ **COMET PING PONG:** 5037 CONNECTICUT AVE. NW; 202-364-0404, COMETPINGPONG.COM.
→ **DC NINE:** 1940 9TH ST. NW; 202-483-5000, DCNINE.COM.
→ **HR-57:** 1610 14TH ST. NW; 202-667-3700,

HR57.ORG.

→ **IOTA:** 2832 WILSON BLVD., ARLINGTON; 703-522-8340, IOTACLUBANDCAFE.COM.
→ **JAMMIN' JAVA:** 227 MAPLE AVE. E., VIENNA, VA.; 703-255-1566, JAMMINJAVA.COM.
→ **JAXX:** 6355 ROLLING ROAD, SPRINGFIELD, VA.; 703-569-5940, JAXXROXX.COM.
→ **KENNEDY CENTER:** 2700 F ST. NW; 800-444-1324, KENNEDY-CENTER.ORG.
→ **THE RED AND THE BLACK:** 1212 H ST. NE; 202-399-3201, REDANDBLACKBAR.COM.
→ **ROCK AND ROLL HOTEL:** 1353 H ST. NE; 202-388-7625, ROCKANDROLLHOTELDC.COM.
→ **STATE THEATRE:** 220 N. WASHINGTON, FALLS CHURCH; 703-237-0300, THESTATETHEATRE.COM.
→ **TWINS JAZZ:** 344 U ST. NW; 202-234-0072, TWINSJAZZ.COM.
→ **VELVET LOUNGE:** 915 U ST. NW; 202-462-3213, VELVETLOUNGEDC.COM.

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PERFORMANCE BEGINS AT NOON

24 THU ★ Monumental Brass Quintet

The award-winning ensemble performs all styles of classical music, as well as Dixieland jazz, ragtime, and traditional holiday favorites.

25 FRI ★ All-Star Christmas Day Jazz Jam

Celebrate this festive Millennium Stage tradition—now in its 12th year—with host and vibraphonist Chuck Redd, pianist Robert Redd, drummer Lenny Robinson, trumpeter Tom Williams, bassist James King, and vocalist Delores Williams.

26 & 27 SAT & SUN ★ Holiday Vaudeville: Sean Grissom, the Alexandria Klezmet, and Mark Mitton

Cajun cellist Sean Grissom hosts two evenings of holiday vaudeville.

IN THE CONCERT HALL

28 MON ★ Weston Jennings

A concert on the Center's Filene Organ.

29 TUE ★ Clare Burson

The critically acclaimed indie songstress delivers evocative and original tunes.

30 WED ★ Irish Christmas in Washington

Featuring Billy McComiskey, Zan McLeod, Brendan Mulvihill, and the Culkin School of Traditional Irish Dance.

31 THU ★ Sidney's Full Swing

The D.C.-based orchestra starts the New Year's festivities early with big band swing tunes.

1 FRI ★ The Grandsons

The roots rock quartet combines New Orleans R&B, rockabilly, swing, and country two step.

2 SAT ★ Family Night: The Snacks

Playing rock and roll for kids, Pete and Maura Kennedy involve the audience as singers, dancers, and sometimes spontaneous songwriters, ending the show with a runaway conga line.

3 SUN ★ John Kocur

The alto saxophonist, composer, and Strathmore-Artist-in-Residence seamlessly blends jazz with rock, hip hop, classical, and world music.

4 MON ★ James Brazen Quartet

The foursome performs vocal and instrumental improvisations from the jazz, soul, Latin, and pop repertoires.

5 TUE ★ François Ladrezeau

The master *gwo-ka* drummer from Guadeloupe leads his troupe in the Afro-Caribbean rhythms of their island.

6 WED ★ Sir Alan and the Calypso Ponzi Schemers featuring Cathy Fink & Marcy Marxer / Etienne Charles

Grammy®-winning local folk artists Fink and Marxer perform with trumpeter Charles and the classic calypso music duo.

ALL PERFORMERS AND PROGRAMS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE.



SAT 2 ★ THE SNACKS



FRI 1 ★ THE GRANDSONS



WED 6 ★ CATHY FINK & MARCY MARXER

DAILY FOOD AND DRINK SPECIALS.

5-6 P.M. NIGHTLY ★ GRAND FOYER BARS

The Millennium Stage was created and underwritten by James A. Johnson and Maxine Isaacs to make the performing arts accessible to everyone in fulfillment of the Kennedy Center's mission to its community and the nation. The Millennium Stage, underwritten by James A. Johnson and Maxine Isaacs, is brought to the public by Target Stores, with additional funding provided by the U.S. Department of Education, The Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation, Capital One, The Meredith Foundation, Dr. Deborah Rose and Dr. Jan A.J. Stolwijk, DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities, the Millennium Stage Endowment Fund, and the Kennedy Center Washington Committee on the Arts.

Live Internet broadcast, video archive, artist information, and more at kennedy-center.org/millennium



TAKE METRO to the Foggy Bottom/GWU station and ride the free Kennedy Center shuttle departing every 15 minutes until midnight.

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For more information call:
(202) 467-4600
(202) 416-8524 TTY



GET CONNECTED! Become a fan of Millennium Stage on Facebook and check out artist photos, upcoming events, and more!

PLEASE NOTE: There is no free parking for free performances.

The Kennedy Center welcomes persons with disabilities.



The Kennedy Center



Weekend Pass | entertainment

the scene

Continued from E8

- Blues Alley:** Ahmad Jamal, 8 & 10 p.m., \$40.
- Bohemian Caverns:** Goapele, 8 p.m., \$20.
- Galaxy Hut:** A Night with the Janel Lepin Group, 9 p.m., \$5.
- Iota:** Molly Hagen, Kat Parsons, 8 p.m., \$10.
- Jammin' Java:** Rocknoceros, 10 a.m. & 12 p.m., \$10; Dana Wells, Dream Dirt, 8 p.m., \$12.
- Jaxx:** Hatebreed, the Acacia Strain, the Casualties, Crowbar, Thy Will Be Done, the World We Know, 4 p.m., \$20.
- State Theatre:** New Potato Caboose, Indecision, 6:30 p.m., \$19.
- Twins Jazz:** Afro Cuban Jazz, 9 & 11 p.m., \$15.
- Velvet Lounge:** Blastoids, Connect the Dots, the White Bitch, In Every Room, 9 p.m., \$7.

Sight

- Aaron Gallery:** "The 20th Annual Small & Miniatures Show," artists limit the size of their constructions, but not the scope of their artistic vision, through Dec. 31. 1717 Connecticut Ave., NW; 202-234-3311, Aarongallerydc.com.
- Addison/Ripley Fine Art:** "Wolf Kahn," the German-born painter presents gentle pastels and oil works, through Jan. 23. 1670 Wisconsin Ave. NW; 202-238-5180, Addisonripley-fineart.com.
- Alexandria Black History Museum:** "Spirits in a Bottle," a lighthearted bottle-filled exhibit pays tribute to the African tradition, through Jan. Permanent and changing exhibitions highlighting Alexandria's rich history. 902 Wythe St., Alexandria; 703-838-4356, Oha.alexandriava.gov/bhrc.
- Anacostia Community Museum:** "Separate but Unequaled," exhibit highlighting the achievements and success of the early segregated baseball leagues. 1901 Fort Place SE; 202-633-1000, Anacostia.si.edu.
- Ann Loeb Bronfman Gallery:** "Blue Like Me: the Work of Siona Benjamin," one Jewish artist's upbringing in Muslim-heavy India is expressed through painting, through Jan. 29. 1529 16th St. NW; 202-518-

Just a Number



GROWING RIGHT: Listen with your eyes closed, and you'd swear local singer-songwriter Dana Wells couldn't possibly be only 19. There's a settled maturity to the lyrics and tempered voice of this strummy smartie that's usually reserved for older artists. She's been performing since she was 13, and on Sunday, Wells releases "The Evergreen EP" at Jammin' Java.

- 9400, Washingtondcjcc.org.
- Arlington Arts Center:** "Image/Project," exhibition of video and paintings juried by Taryn Simon, through Jan. 16. 3550 Wilson Blvd., Arlington; 703-248-6800, Arlingtonartscenter.org.
- Arthur M. Sackler Gallery:** "Falnama: the Book of Omens," vividly illustrated manuscripts on the end of days from the Islamic world, through Jan. 24. "Perspectives: Anish Kapoor," curved and elongated

- metallic sculptures from the Indian sculptor, through Jan. 3. 1050 Independence Ave. SW; 202-633-1000, Asia.si.edu.
- The Art League Gallery:** "One Less Traveled," landscape photographs from Pamela Viola explore a haunting world just off the beaten path, through Jan. 10. 105 N. Union St., Alexandria; 703-683-1780, Theartleague.org.
- Art Museum of the Americas:**

- "Bilateral Engagement," a survey of Washington Sculptor Guild work in honor of its 25th anniversary, through Jan. 15. 201 18th St. NW; 202-458-6016, Museum.oas.org.
- Athenaeum:** "New Mythology," animal-inspired paintings from Tracey Clarke create a fantasy-heavy new world, through Jan. 3. 201 Prince St., Alexandria; 703-548-0035, Nvfaa.org.
- Conner Contemporary Art:** "Cos-

- mopolitan Chicken Art," Belgian conceptual artist Koen Vanmechelen meditates on cultural identity through chicken breeding, through Dec. 31. 1358 Florida Ave. NE; 202-588-8750, Connercontemporary.com.
- Corcoran Gallery of Art:** "Sargent and the Sea," rare seascape and coastal paintings from John Singer Sargent, through Jan. 3; other permanent exhibitions of paintings and sculptures, 500 17th St. NW; 202-639-1700, Corcoran.org.
- Cross Mackenzie Gallery:** "Walter McConnell," photographs imprinted on ceramic and porcelain pieces, through Jan. 10. 1054 31st St. NW; 202-333-7970, Crossmackenzie.com.
- D.C. Arts Center:** "Black," artists wrestle with the larger implications and meanings of the color, through Jan. 10. 2438 18th St. NW; 202-462-7833, Dcartscenter.org.
- Embassy of Canada:** "Yousuf Karsh at 100: Portraits of Artists," rich surfaces and graceful composition define the Canadian artist's swank photographs, through Dec. 18. 501 Pennsylvania Ave. NW; 202-682-1740, Canadainternational.gc.ca/washington.
- Embassy of France:** "Nouvelles Histories," abstract, pastel-heavy paintings from Isabelle Babington, through Jan. 8. 2142 Wyoming Ave. NW; 202-234-7911, francedc.org.
- Embassy of Japan:** "Japan Through Our Eyes," local alumni of the Japanese Exchange and Teaching Program provide a photographic look into the culture of Japan, through Jan. 8. 2520 Massachusetts Ave. NW; 202-238-6949, Us.emb-japan.go.jp.
- Folger Shakespeare Library:** "Imagining China: the View from Europe, 1550-1700," woodprints, maps and paintings illustrate early modern Europeans' fascination with China, through Jan. 9. 201 East Capitol St. SE; 202-544-4600, Folger.edu.
- LAST CHANCE The Foundry Gallery:** "Baghdad Memories," paintings from Iraqi refugee Ahmed Alkarkhi through Sat. 1314 18th St. NW; 202-463-0203, Foundrygallery.org.
- Fraser Gallery:** "Winter Group Exhibit," new paintings from David FeBland, Mike Fitts, Tim O'Kane and others, through Jan. 9. 7700 Wisconsin Ave., Bethesda; 301-718-9651, Thefrasergallery.com.
- Freer Gallery of Art:** "Texture of Night: Continued on E12

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Right Oneself," static shots of very violent action from photographer Kerry Skarbakka; "Uncomissioned Memorials," marble and stone creations from Sebastian Martorana, through Jan. 30. 1412 14th St. NW; 202-332-8767, irvinecontemporary.com.

The Jerusalem Fund Gallery: "Mental Meditations," two-sided paintings from Ammar Qusaibaty use the idea of

metaphor in Arabic culture to reflect on life and art, through Jan. 8. 2425 Virginia Ave. NW; 202-338-1958, Thejerusalemfund.org.

LAST CHANCE The Joan Hisaoka Healing Arts Gallery: "Ink-N-Print 09," Helen Frederick curates an affordable selection of the best local print artists, through Thu. 1632 U St. NW; 202-483-8600, Smithfarm.com/gallery.

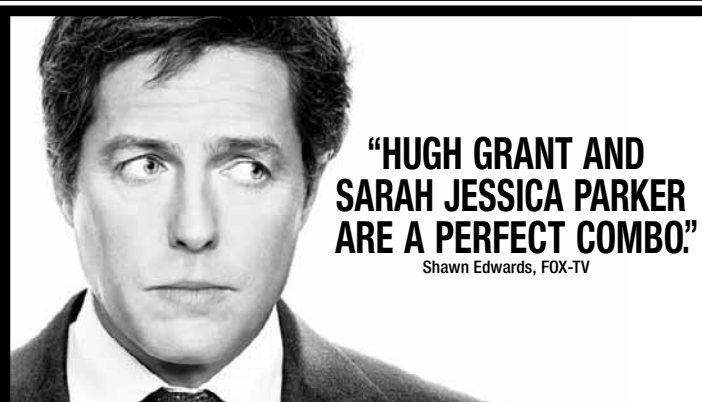
Koshland Science Museum: Various science-related exhibits. 6th & E streets NW; 202-334-1201, Koshland-science-museum.org

The Kreeger Museum: "Kentridge and Kudryashov: Against the Grain," dramatic and harsh political climates set the foundation for the terse and color-dipped paintings from South Africa's William Kentridge and Russia's Oleg

Kudryashov, through Dec. 30; sculpture garden featuring works from the Washington Sculptors Guild, through June. 2401 Foxhall Road NW; 202-337-3050, Kreegermuseum.org.

The Lyceum: "Tramping and Trailing With the Girl Scouts," collection of photos and artifacts detail the growth and expansion of scouting in the D.C. area,

Continued on E15



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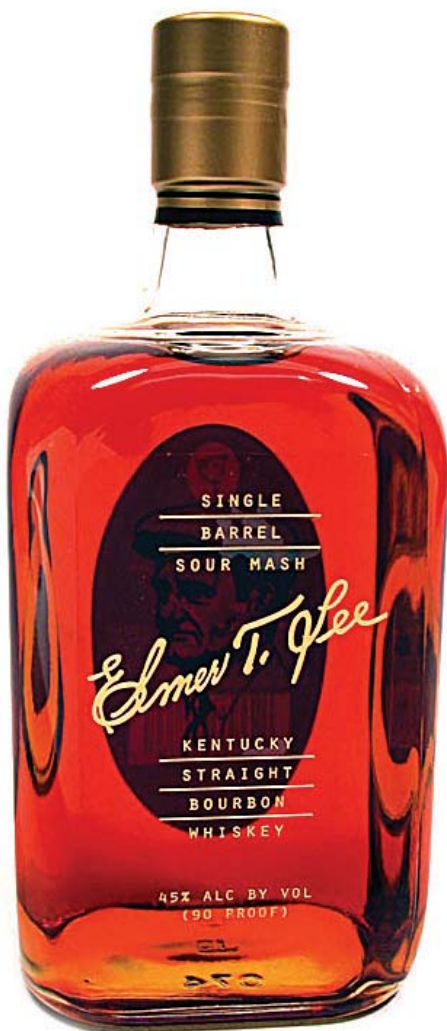
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Some holiday food gifts are classics: a box of chocolate, a bag of coffee — either you've given them or you've received them. But why go for the usual when there are delicious, but less predictable, options found locally? **ROBERT MARGETTA**



↑ Picking the right alcohol to take to a holiday party can be tricky — you want to bring something nice, but not break the bank. Terry Brown, wine manager at Schneider's of Capitol Hill, recommended his store's "absolutely beautiful" single-barrel, small-cask **Elmer T. Lee Bourbon**, on seasonal sale for \$30. As for wines, Brown said Schneider's is offering bottles of Opolo Fusion for \$20 — \$15 less than the usual price. "It's half Syrah, half cabernet," he said. "There's lots of cherry fruit to it — great for roast beef, Yorkshire pudding or another big holiday meal." 300 Massachusetts Ave. NE; 202-543-9300.



What better gift to give during the winter holidays than something that can warm up a cold day? Washington has several local coffee roasters and importers who are seeing their beans fly off the shelves. "Right now, we see a lot of Indonesian coffees, which are good for the holidays because they compliment meals," said Joel Finkelstein of Qualia Coffee. Mark Warmuth, president of M.E. Swing Co. said his company's **Jamaica Blue Mountain coffee** is a fast seller in December. But, he pointed out, potential gift-givers should do their research. "Does the recipient have a grinder?" he said. "That's the thing." Qualia Coffee, 3917 Georgia Ave. NW; 202-248-6423; M.E. Swing Coffee House, 1702 G St. NW.; 202-628-7601.

★ Got a non-coffee drinker on your list? Teatism is offering a **Three-Tea Gift Sampler Pack** for \$30. Each contains a black tea, a green tea and an herbal tea, although the blends vary. It's all loose leaf, so you may want to pick up an infuser (\$3-\$12) if your tea-drinker is a novice. Available at all locations; find addresses and store hours at Teatism.com.



For the holidays, Artfully Chocolate Kingsbury Confections has rolled out two types of Eggnog **Truffles**, along with peppermint, rose blossom and fig and Cognac flavors. Small orders can be made on the spot, but the staff advises anyone with a large order to call it in. (Prices range from \$7.95 for four pieces to \$46 for 24.) Available at all locations; find addresses and store hours at Thecocoagallery.com.



★ Of course, there are less expensive candy alternatives. **The fleur de sel caramels** (\$6.99) at Trader Joe's have just enough of a salty essence to enhance the flavor of burnt sugar but not overwhelm the tongue. Various stores in D.C., Virginia and Maryland; find locations at Traderjoes.com.

the scene**Continued from E13**

through May 31. 201 S. Washington St., Alexandria; 703-838-4554, Historicalalexandria.org.

Mexican Cultural Institute: "Dialogues in Mexican Photography," showing the best of the Mexican photographic community, through Jan. 30. 2829 16th St. NW; 202-728-1628, Instituteofmexicodc.org.

National Air and Space Museum: "Alan Bean: Painting Apollo, First Artist on Another World," reflections and paintings from the fourth man on the moon; ongoing exhibitions and largest collection of historic aircraft and spacecraft in the world. 6th Street & Independence Avenue SW; 202-633-1000, Nasm.si.edu.

National Building Museum: "Form and Movement," photographs from Philip Trager explore light and symmetry in the construction of buildings, through Jan. 3. "House of Cars," exploring the relationship between parked cars and humans, through July. 401 F St. NW; 202-272-2448, Nbm.org.

National Gallery of Art, East Building: "Editions With Additions: Working Proofs by Jasper Johns," through Jan. 10; "Alexander Calder"; "The Robert and Jane Meyeroff Collection: Selected Works," through May 2. **National Gallery of Art, West Building:** "Robert Bergman: Portraits, 1986-1995," portraits of the street people encountered and shot by the artist on an everyday basis through Jan. 10; "The Darker Side of Light: Arts of Privacy," moody reflections from private 19th-century collections, through Jan. 18; "Renaissance to Revolution: French Drawings From the National Gallery of Art, 1500-1800," through Jan. 31; "Designing the Lincoln Memorial: Daniel Chester French & Henry Bacon" features a plaster final model of the statue, through Feb. "In the Darkroom: Photographic Processes Before the Digital Age," exhibition of the history and developing craft of capturing images on film, through March 14. Permanent exhibit, European and American paintings, sculpture and decorative arts from the 13th through the 19th centuries. 6th Street & Constitution Avenue NW; 202-737-4215, Nga.gov.

National Geographic: "Terra Cotta War-

riors," the legendary Chinese clay figures come to D.C., through March 31; "Polar Obsession," photographs from the frigid and chilling arctic world, through Feb. 15. "National Geographic Image Collection," best of the magazine's storied collection, through April 15. 1145 17th St. NW; 202-857-7588, Nationalgeographic.com/museum.

National Museum of African Art: "Artful Animals," a family-friendly exhibition looks

into Africa and its animals, through Feb. 21. "Yinka Shonibare MBE," a wide swath of art from the British-born Nigerian artist provides a look into the intersection of African culture and the effects of British colonialism, through March 7. 950 Independence Ave. SW; 202-633-4600, Africa.si.edu.

National Museum of American History: The newly light-filled space contains an array of ongoing exhibitions,

including "The Scurlock Studio and Black Washington: Picturing the Promise," through Feb.; "The Star-Spangled Banner: The Flag That Inspired the National Anthem"; "On the Water: Stories From Maritime America"; "Bon Appetit! Julia Child's Kitchen at the Smithsonian"; and many more, permanent collection. 14th Street & Constitution Avenue NW; 202-633-1000, Americanhistory.si.edu.

National Museum of the American

Indian: "IndiVisible: African-Native American Lives in the Americas," 20-panel exhibition focuses on the relations between African American and American Indians through May 31. Displays about the history and culture of American Indians, permanent collection. 4th Street and Independence Avenue SW; 202-633-1000, Nmai.si.edu.

Continued on E16

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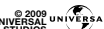
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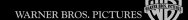
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the scene

Continued from E15

National Museum of Natural History:

"Dig It! The Secrets of the Soil," through Jan. "Since Darwin: The Evolution of Evolution," the history and timeline of one of the most influential scientific theories,

through July 18; "Farmers, Warriors, Builders: The Hidden Life of Ants," the quiet and powerful impact of some of nature's smallest creatures, through Oct. 10; "Written in Bone: Forensic Files of the 17th-Century Chesapeake," through Feb. 2011, other permanent exhibitions. 10th Street & Constitution Avenue NW; 202-633-1000, mnhs.edu.

National Museum of Women in the Arts:

"Land of Enchantment: Australian

Aboriginal Painting," the intricate patterns and vibrant color of Australia's finest artists; "Telling Secrets: Codes, Captions, and Conundrums in Contemporary Art," 39 pieces of multilayered art offer the chance to contemplate the different meanings and interpretations; "Elements of Nature: Equines and Still Lives by Clarice Smith," 20 paintings from Smith's keen vision of the natural world, all through Jan. 10; "Hard

Copy, Book as Sculpture," books that blend the line between paper and sculpture, through Jan. 17. 1250 New York Ave. NW; 202-783-5000, nmwa.org.

National Portrait Gallery: "Presidents in Waiting," through Jan. 3; "Faces of the Frontier: Photographic Portraits From the American West, 1845-1924," through Jan. 24; "Portraiture Now: Communities," the individual members of small towns

and families come alive through the individual portraits, through July 5; "Outwin Boochever Portrait Competition," through Aug. Other permanent exhibitions, 8th & F streets NW; 202-633-1000, npg.si.edu.

Newseum: "Manhunt: Chasing Lincoln's Killer," how developments in journalism helped the pursuit of John Wilkes Booth, through Feb. 28. "Woodstock at 40: The Rise of Music Journalism," photographs, artifacts and coverage from the seminal event, through Oct. 31. "G-Men and Journalists," a history of media coverage and the FBI, both through Dec. 31; "Athlete: the Sports Illustrated Photography of Walter Iooss," nearly 50 years of documenting the world of sports from one of its greatest photographers, through Dec. 31, ongoing permanent exhibitions illustrating the role of a free press in a free society. 555 Pennsylvania Ave. NW; 888-639-7386, newseum.org.

The Phillips Collection: "Man Ray, African Art and the Modernist Lens," iconic photos that recontextualized African art and revolutionized photography, through Jan. "Brain Storm," stunning video installation from Jennifer Wen Ma, through Jan. 3. "Object as Subject: Photographs of the Czech Avant-Garde," ahead-of-their-time photography from Czech artists, through Feb. 7. 1600 21st St. NW; 202-387-2151, phillipscollection.org.

Project 4 Gallery: "Once," elegant porcelain forms from Laura Lukaszewski are draped gracefully throughout the gallery in a tough-but-fragile installation, through Dec. 18. 1353 U St. NW; 202-232-4340, project4gallery.com.

Renwick Gallery: "Staged Stories: Renwick Craft Invitational 2009," Christyl Boger, Mark Newport, Mary Van Cline and SunKoo Yuh handle ceramic and fiber past traditional limits of functionality and focus on the narrative qualities of their material, through Jan. 3; "Grand Salon — Paintings From the Smithsonian American Art Museum," permanent. 1661 Pennsylvania Ave. NW; 202-633-2850, americanart.si.edu/renwick.

Reyes + Davis: "Fine Lines," An exhibition of drawings from Janis Goodman, Kate McGraw, Linn Meyers and Jennifer Mullins, through Dec. 31. "Icarus: Intersections," through Jan. 31. 923 F St. NW; 202-255-5050, reyesdavis.com.

Smithsonian American Art Museum: "1934: A New Deal for Artists," paintings spawned from the first federally funded program for the arts, through Jan. 3. "The Honor of Your Com-

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SCREEN STORY BY LIONEL VIGRAM AND MICHAEL ROBERT JOHNSON SCREENPLAY BY MICHAEL ROBERT JOHNSON AND ANTHONY PECKHAM AND SIMON KIMBERG DIRECTED BY GUY RITCHIE

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STARTS TOMORROW - CHECK DIRECTORIES FOR LISTINGS

pany Is Requested," President Abraham Lincoln's inaugural ball, through Jan. 18. "What's It All Mean?" retrospective of the paintings and work of William T. Wiley, through Jan. 24. Permanent collection, ongoing. 8th & F streets NW; 202-633-1000, Americanart.si.edu.

Stamp Gallery: "Toppled," multidimensional media mix in Jessica Vaughn's examination of the role of movement in the exploration of race, politics and myth, through Dec. 18. 1222 Stamp Student Union, University of Maryland, Baltimore Avenue & Rossborough Lane, College Park, Md.; 301-405-1000, Thestamp.umd.edu/gallery.

Studio Gallery: "Call and Response," 35 member artists exhibit a range of works encompassing various forms and topics, through Dec. 19. 2108 R St.; 202-232-8734, Studiogallerydc.com.

The Textile Museum: "Recent Acquisitions," the top new additions to the museum, through Jan. 3; "Contemporary Japanese Fashion: The Mary Basket Collection," through April 11. 2320 S St. NW; 202-667-0441, textilmuseum.org.

Transformer Gallery: "A Hole in the Wall," yellow bricks, video and changing constructions mark Geoffrey Aldridge's reflections on the continuing struggle of the gay community, through Dec. 26. 1404 P St. NW; 202-483-1102, Transformergallery.org.

U.S. Botanic Garden: "African-American Gardens: Places of the Spirit." "Holiday Magic," through Jan. 10. Permanent exhibitions of more than 4,000 plants and a tropical rain forest. 100 Maryland Ave. SW; 202-225-8333, Usbg.gov.

U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum: "A Dangerous Lie: Protocols of the Elders of Zion," "State of Deception: The Power of Nazi Propaganda," "Remember the Children: Daniel's Story," alongside other poignant exhibitions of artifacts, photographs and oral histories from the Holocaust era. 100 Raoul Wallenberg Place/15th St. SW; 202-488-0400, ushmm.org.

Washington Printmakers Gallery: "Days o' Work," etchings, woodcuts and rubbings from Trudi Y. Ludwig provide an earthy center to philosophical conundrums. 1732 Connecticut Ave. NW; 202-332-7757, Washingtonprintmakers.com.

Washington Project for the Arts: "Ice-box," a collection of small and reasonably priced works just in time for the season of giving, through Dec. 21. 2023 Massachusetts Ave. NW; 202-234-7103, Wpadc.org.

WVSA Articulate Gallery: "It's All About the Journey," transportation-

The Baby Jesus Won't Be Offended



SETH KUSHNER

FUNNY YOU SHOULD ASK: Even if visions of gelfilte fish aren't dancing in your head this time of year, there's a place for the pun-filled, satiric and sometimes affectionate holiday humor of Rob Tannenbaum and David Fagin. Performing as Good for the Jews, the comedic duo brings its song-filled performance of "Putting the Ha in Hanukah" to Jammin' Java on Thursday.

themed art from some of younger artists of WVSA, through Jan. 23. 1100 16th St. NW; 202-296-9100, Wvsarts.org.

Stage

Camelot: The Tony Award-winning musical journey into knighthood, love, betrayal and royalty, through Jan. 17, \$26-\$49. Olney Theatre Center, 2001 Olney-Sandy Spring Road, Olney; 301-924-3400, Olneytheatre.org.

A Christmas Carol: Scrooge and the Christmastime spirits come to life in Ford's Theatre's rendering of Charles Dickens' classic story, through Jan. 3. \$30-\$41. 514 10th St. NW; 800-587-5238, Fords.org.

The Fantasticks: Arena Stage puts on the timeless musical love story, with its

Continued on E18

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Photo: Hilary Schwab

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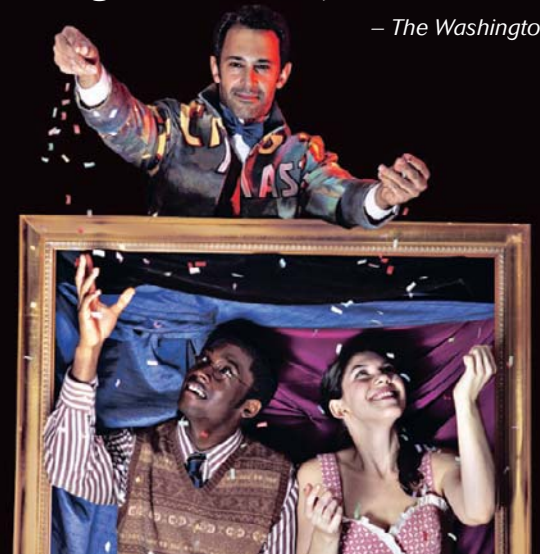
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the scene

Continued from E17

bevy of beautiful songs and charming story of a perfect pair whose families intervene, through Jan. 10, \$25-\$74. 1215 U St. NW; 202-488-3300, Arena stage.org.

Judy Gold is Mommy Queerest: Stand-up performer Gold's new show presents the candid challenges of being a gay single mom, comedian and activist in New York City, through Jan. 3, \$30-\$55. Theater J, 1529 16th NW; 800-494-8497, Theaterj.org.

Reflections in Steel



SHINING CURTAIN: Steel is given a gentle touch in the hands of Indian sculptor Anish Kapoor. Currently at the Sackler Gallery, the two 16-foot lengths of the stuff are given luminescence to inspire thought and reflection. That's the point of "Perspectives," a contemporary Asian art series at the gallery that seeks to transform the way people visually digest sculpture.

local movie times

Washington DC

Landmark Theatres	
Landmark's E-Street Cinema	www.landmarktheatres.com

BROKEN EMBRACES (R) 12:30, 3:30/6:30
THE YOUNG VICTORIA (PG) 12:45, 1:45, 3:15, 4:15, 5:45/6:45
FLAME & CITRON (NR) 12:30, 3:30/6:50
AN EDUCATION (PG-13) 2:10, 4:40/7:00
PIRATE RADIO (R) 4:20
THE MESSENGER (R) 1:30/7:10
A SERIOUS MAN (R) 1:45
ME AND ORSON WELLES (PG-13) 4:50/7:15
RED CLIFF (R) 1:00, 4:00/7:00

The Avalon Theatre	
The Avalon Theatre	www.theavalon.org

INVICTUS (PG-13) 11:30, 3:15, 7:00, 10:45
THE BLIND SIDE (PG-13) 2:15, 5:00, 7:45

AMC Theaters	
AMC Loews Uptown	www.amctheatres.com

AVATAR 3D (PG-13) 11:30, 3:15, 7:00, 10:45

AMC Theaters	
AMC Mazza Gallerie	www.amctheatres.com

ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: THE SQUEAKQUEL (PG) 10:00, 12:00, 2:10, 4:30, 7:30, 10:00
DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THE MORGANS? (PG-13) 11:45, 2:15, 5:00, 7:45, 10:20
AVATAR 3D (PG-13) 11:30, 3:15, 7:00, 10:45
IN DIGITAL 3-D

THE PRINCESS AND THE FROG (G) 10:15, 12:30, 3:00, 5:30, 8:00, 10:25
EVERYBODY'S FINE (PG-13) 11:20, 2:00, 4:20, 7:10
THE BLIND SIDE (PG-13) 10:30, 1:20, 4:15, 7:15, 10:05
2012 (PG-13) 9:45 P.M.
AMC Select

THE HURT LOCKER (R) 10:20, 1:15, 4:10, 7:20, 10:15

AMC Theaters	
AMC Loews Georgetown	www.amctheatres.com

ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: THE SQUEAKQUEL (PG) 10:40, 12:55, 3:10, 5:30, 7:50, 10:15
AMC Select

UP IN THE AIR (R) 10:30, 11:40, 1:15, 2:15, 4:00, 5:00, 6:45, 7:45, 9:30, 10:30
AVATAR (PG-13) 12:30, 4:15, 8:00
DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THE MORGANS? (PG-13) 11:35, 12:35, 2:05, 3:05, 4:40, 5:40, 7:15, 8:15, 9:50
AVATAR 3D (PG-13) 11:30, 3:15, 7:00, 10:30
IN DIGITAL 3-D

THE PRINCESS AND THE FROG (G) 12:10, 2:40, 5:05, 7:30, 9:55
12:10, 2:40, 5:05, 7:30, 9:55
INVICTUS (PG-13) 1:00, 4:05, 7:10, 10:20
BROTHERS (R) 11:00, 1:45, 4:25, 7:05, 9:45
EVERYBODY'S FINE (PG-13) 10:35, 12:50, 3:20, 5:45, 8:05
FANTASTIC MR. FOX (PG) 10:25, 12:45, 3:00, 5:25, 7:40, 10:00
THE TWILIGHT SAGA: NEW MOON (PG-13) 10:15, 1:20, 4:20, 7:20, 10:10
THE BLIND SIDE (PG-13) 10:45, 1:30, 4:30, 7:35, 10:25

Regal Cinemas	
Regal Gallery Place Stadium	www.regmovies.com

IT'S COMPLICATED (R)
SHERLOCK HOLMES (PG-13)
AVATAR 3D (PG-13) 11:30, 12:45, 3:15, 4:25/7:00, 7:50
ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: THE SQUEAKQUEL (PG) 11:40, 12:30, 2:00, 3:00/4:30, 5:40, 7:10, 7:55
DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THE MORGANS? (PG-13) 11:40, 2:20/5:00, 7:45
AVATAR (PG-13) 12:00/3:45, 7:30
INVICTUS (PG-13) 4:00
12:50/7:15
THE PRINCESS AND THE FROG (G) 11:35, 1:55/4:15, 6:40
UP IN THE AIR (R) 11:45, 12:40, 2:25/3:30, 5:05, 6:30, 7:50
BROTHERS (R) 1:00/3:45, 6:50
THE ROAD (R) 11:35, 2:15/5:15, 8:00
THE BLIND SIDE (PG-13) 1:20/4:20, 7:35
PRECIOUS: BASED ON THE NOVEL "PUSH" BY SAPHIRE (R) 11:50, 2:40/5:30, 8:00

Virginia

Old Town Theatre	
Alexandria	www.oldtowntheatre.com

Call theatre for show information

Arlington Cinema 'N' Drafthouse	
Arlington	www.arlingtondrafthouse.com

Call theatre for show information

Regal Potomac Yards	
Alexandria	www.regmovies.com

IT'S COMPLICATED (R)
SHERLOCK HOLMES (PG-13)
ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: THE SQUEAKQUEL (PG) 10:00, 11:00, 12:00, 12:30, 1:40, 2:40, 3:05, 4:05, 5:05, 5:45/6:45, 7:45
AVATAR 3D (PG-13) 11:40, 12:40, 3:20, 4:20/7:00, 8:00
AVATAR (PG-13) 10:40, 2:20/6:00
DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THE MORGANS? (PG-13) 11:30, 2:10, 4:50/7:30
INVICTUS (PG-13) 3:40
12:20/6:50
THE PRINCESS AND THE FROG (G) 10:25, 11:25, 1:00, 2:00, 3:35, 4:35/6:10, 7:10
BROTHERS (R) 10:55, 1:50, 4:40/7:40
THE TWILIGHT SAGA: NEW MOON (PG-13) 12:05, 3:10/6:15
THE BLIND SIDE (PG-13) 11:50, 12:50, 2:55, 3:55/6:20, 7:20
2012 (PG-13) 10:50, 2:50/6:30
PRECIOUS: BASED ON THE NOVEL "PUSH" BY SAPHIRE (R) 11:15, 2:00, 5:00/7:50

Regal Kingstowne Stadium	
Alexandria	www.regmovies.com

IT'S COMPLICATED (R)
SHERLOCK HOLMES (PG-13)
ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: THE SQUEAKQUEL (PG) 11:20, 1:20, 2:00/4:00, 4:40, 6:30, 7:10
AVATAR 3D (PG-13) 11:50, 12:20/3:20, 3:50, 6:50, 7:20
AVATAR (PG-13) 1:00/4:30
DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THE MORGANS? (PG-13) 1:30/4:20, 7:40
INVICTUS (PG-13) 12:00/3:10, 6:20
THE PRINCESS AND THE FROG (G) 11:30, 2:20/5:00, 7:30
UP IN THE AIR (R) 11:10, 1:50/4:50, 7:50
BROTHERS (R) 12:10/3:00, 6:10
THE BLIND SIDE (PG-13) 12:50/3:40, 7:00
THE TWILIGHT SAGA: NEW MOON (PG-13) 12:30/3:30, 6:40
DISNEY'S A CHRISTMAS CAROL (PG) 11:40, 2:50/5:30

Regal Ballston Common Stadium	
Arlington	www.regmovies.com

SHERLOCK HOLMES (PG-13)
AVATAR 3D (PG-13) 12:00, 2:40, 3:40/6:20, 7:00
AVATAR (PG-13) 1:00, 4:40
THE PRINCESS AND THE FROG (G) 12:55, 1:55, 3:25, 4:25/6:00, 7:20
UP IN THE AIR (R) 1:15, 2:15, 3:55, 4:55/6:40, 7:40
ARMORED (PG-13) 7:05
BROTHERS (R) 1:25, 4:30/7:30
NINJA ASSASSIN (R) 6:30
THE TWILIGHT SAGA: NEW MOON (PG-13) 12:45, 4:05/7:15
FANTASTIC MR. FOX (PG) 12:15, 2:35
2012 (PG-13) 12:20, 3:45/7:10
DISNEY'S A CHRISTMAS CAROL (PG) 1:30, 4:00

AMC Theatres Courthouse Plaza	
Arlington	www.amctheatres.com

ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: THE SQUEAKQUEL (PG) 12:05, 12:50, 2:15, 3:15, 4:30, 5:30, 6:40, 7:40
AMC Select
THE ROAD (R) 5:00, 7:30
DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THE MORGANS? (PG-13) 12:00, 2:30
1:00, 3:30, 5:50
INVICTUS (PG-13) 12:30, 1:30, 3:25, 4:25, 6:30, 7:20
OLD DOGS (PG) 12:10, 2:25, 4:30
THE BLIND SIDE (PG-13) 2:20, 5:10, 7:10, 8:00

AMC Theatres Hoffman Center	
Alexandria	www.amctheatres.com

ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: THE SQUEAKQUEL (PG) 10:55, 12:10, 1:45, 3:05, 4:35, 5:35, 7:40, 8:25
AMC Select

UP IN THE AIR (R) 10:45, 11:45, 1:40, 2:30, 4:30, 5:20, 7:25, 8:10, 10:10
AMC Select

THE ROAD (R) 12:55, 3:40, 6:45, 9:30
DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THE MORGANS? (PG-13) 11:05, 1:00, 2:00, 3:45, 4:45, 6:35, 7:35, 9:25
AVATAR: AN IMAX 3D EXPERIENCE (PG-13) 11:30, 3:15, 7:00
AVATAR 3D (PG-13) 10:30, 12:30, 2:15, 4:15, 6:00, 8:00, 9:45
IN DIGITAL 3-D

THE PRINCESS AND THE FROG (G) 12:25, 1:05, 3:00, 3:50, 5:50, 6:30, 8:30, 9:20
11:25, 2:05, 4:55, 7:45
INVICTUS (PG-13) 11:20, 1:25, 2:50, 4:50, 6:15, 8:15, 9:35
ARMORED (PG-13) 10:40, 1:20, 4:05, 6:40, 9:15
BROTHERS (R) 1:10, 4:00, 7:05, 10:00
FANTASTIC MR. FOX (PG) 12:45, 3:25
NINJA ASSASSIN (R) 6:05, 9:05
THE TWILIGHT SAGA: NEW MOON (PG-13) 11:00, 2:20, 5:40, 9:00
THE BLIND SIDE (PG-13) 12:50, 4:10, 7:20
2012 (PG-13) 11:10, 3:20, 7:10
DISNEY'S A CHRISTMAS CAROL (PG) 10:50, 1:35, 4:25, 7:15, 10:05

Maryland

AFI Silver Theatre Cultural Center	
Silver Spring	www.afi.com/silver

UP IN THE AIR (R) 12:25, 2:40, 4:55, 7:20, 9:35
AN EDUCATION (PG-13) 2:35, 7:05
A SERIOUS MAN (R) 12:20, 4:45, 9:15
IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE (NR) 1:45, 4:20, 7:00, 9:40

Landmark Bethesda Row Cinema	
Bethesda	www.landmarktheatres.com

BROKEN EMBRACES (R) 10:10, 1:00, 3:45/6:45
THE YOUNG VICTORIA (PG) 11:00, 1:40, 4:20/7:00, 8:15
UP IN THE AIR (R) 10:15, 11:15, 12:45, 1:45, 3:30, 4:30/6:15, 7:15
AN EDUCATION (PG-13) 11:30, 2:00, 4:40/7:10
THE ROAD (R) 11:45, 2:15, 4:45/7:20
PRECIOUS: BASED ON THE NOVEL "PUSH" BY SAPHIRE (R) 11:10, 1:50, 4:25/7:05
FANTASTIC MR. FOX (PG) 11:05, 1:30, 3:50/6:00

AMC Loews Center Park	
Beltsville	www.amctheatres.com

ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: THE SQUEAKQUEL (PG) 12:50, 3:10, 5:30, 7:40, 9:55
AVATAR (PG-13) 12:00, 3:30, 7:00, 10:25
DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THE MORGANS? (PG-13) 12:25, 3:00, 5:25, 7:50, 10:20
THE PRINCESS AND THE FROG (G) 12:15, 2:45, 5:10, 7:30, 9:45
INVICTUS (PG-13) 1:10, 4:10, 7:05, 10:00
ARMORED (PG-13) 1:15, 3:25, 5:40, 8:00, 10:10
THE BLIND SIDE (PG-13) 1:45, 4:40, 7:45, 10:35
2012 (PG-13) 12:30, 3:50, 7:10, 10:30

AMC Loews White Flint	
Kensington	www.amctheatres.com

AVATAR (PG-13) 12:00, 3:30, 7:00
DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THE MORGANS? (PG-13) 11:00, 1:30, 4:15, 7:30
THE PRINCESS AND THE FROG (G) 11:45, 2:15, 4:45, 7:15
FANTASTIC MR. FOX (PG) 11:15, 1:45, 4:00, 6:45
THE BLIND SIDE (PG-13) 10:20, 1:15, 4:30, 7:45

Rent: The award-winning musical look into the troubles and struggles of a group of young New York bohemians in the 1980s is presented by Keegan Theatre, through Jan. 17, \$30-\$35. Church Street Theater, 1742 Church St. NW; 703-892-0202, Keegantheatre.com.

LAST CHANCE Santaland Diaries: David Sedaris' hysterical holiday-themed essay about working as a Macy's elf gets a suitably hysterical rendering in this adaptation starring Joe Brack, through Thu., \$15. Warehouse Theater, 1021 7th St. NW; 800-838-3006, Cityartisticpartnerships.org/cap.

The Screwtape Letters: Get inside

AMC Magic Johnson Capital Center	
Largo	www.amctheatres.com

ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: THE SQUEAKQUEL (PG) 10:35, 11:50, 12:50, 2:20, 3:20, 4:50, 5:50, 7:20, 8:20, 9:50, 10:35
AVATAR (PG-13) 12:15, 4:05, 7:45
DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THE MORGANS? (PG-13) 12:05, 2:35, 5:05, 7:35, 10:05
AVATAR 3D (PG-13) 11:00, 2:45, 6:30, 10:15
IN DIGITAL 3-D

THE PRINCESS AND THE FROG (G) 11:05, 12:30, 1:00, 2:00, 3:00, 3:30, 4:30, 5:30, 7:00, 8:00, 9:30, 10:25
INVICTUS (PG-13) 10:40, 1:40, 4:40, 7:40, 10:30
ARMORED (PG-13) 11:20, 1:50, 4:20, 6:50, 9:15
OLD DOGS (PG) 9:20 P.M.
AMC Select
PRECIOUS: BASED ON THE NOVEL "PUSH" BY SAPHIRE (R) 11:25, 2:25, 4:55, 7:25, 9:55
THE BLIND SIDE (PG-13) 10:30, 1:20, 4:10, 7:10, 10:10
2012 (PG-13) 6:00 P.M.

Regal Bethesda	
Bethesda	www.regmovies.com

IT'S COMPLICATED (R)
SHERLOCK HOLMES (PG-13)
ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: THE SQUEAKQUEL (PG) 11:50, 12:40, 2:10, 3:00, 4:30, 5:20, 6:50, 7:40
DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THE MORGANS? (PG-13) 11:35, 2:00, 4:40/7:10
AVATAR (PG-13) 1:05, 4:25/7:45
AVATAR 3D (PG-13) 12:20, 3:40/7:00
INVICTUS (PG-13) 12:30, 1:30, 3:30, 4:30/6:30, 7:30
THE PRINCESS AND THE FROG (G) 11:40, 1:50, 4:20/6:40
THE BLIND SIDE (PG-13) 12:50, 3:50/7:20
DISNEY'S A CHRISTMAS CAROL (PG) 11:30, 1:45, 4:00/6:20

Regal Majestic Cinema	
Silver Spring	www.regmovies.com

IT'S COMPLICATED (R)
SHERLOCK HOLMES (PG-13)
ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: THE SQUEAKQUEL (PG) 10:15, 11:25, 12:05, 12:40, 1:30, 2:30, 3:00, 3:50, 4:40, 5:20, 6:55, 7:35
10:55, 1:05, 3:35, 5:50
AVATAR 3D (PG-13) 10:00, 11:45, 1:15, 3:15, 4:30/6:45, 7:45
AVATAR (PG-13) 10:30, 12:30, 1:45, 4:00, 5:00/7:15
DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THE MORGANS? (PG-13) 12:00, 2:20, 4:50/7:30
THE PRINCESS AND THE FROG (G) 10:20, 11:30, 12:15, 12:45, 1:55, 2:35, 3:25, 4:10, 4:45, 5:35/6:30, 7:05, 8:00
INVICTUS (PG-13) 10:25, 1:20, 4:20/7:25
ARMORED (PG-13) 10:40, 1:00, 3:10/6:10
BROTHERS (R) 11:05, 1:40, 4:35/7:20
NINJA ASSASSIN (R) 6:00 P.M.
THE BLIND SIDE (PG-13) 11:15, 2:15, 5:15
THE TWILIGHT SAGA: NEW MOON (PG-13) 12:25, 3:45/7:00
2012 (PG-13) 10:50, 2:40/6:15
DISNEY'S A CHRISTMAS CAROL (PG) 10:10, 12:55, 3:30
PRECIOUS: BASED ON THE NOVEL "PUSH" BY SAPHIRE (R) 10:45, 1:35, 4:25/7:50

Regal Royale Stadium	
Hyattsville	www.regmovies.com

IT'S COMPLICATED (R)
SHERLOCK HOLMES (PG-13)
ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: THE SQUEAKQUEL (PG) 11:30, 2:00, 4:15/7:15
ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: THE SQUEAKQUEL (PG) 11:30, 2:00, 4:15/7:15
AVATAR 3D (PG-13) 11:55, 3:45/7:00
AVATAR (PG-13) 11:25, 3:05/6:30
DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THE MORGANS? (PG-13) 11:15, 1:45, 4:05/6:35
THE PRINCESS AND THE FROG (G) 11:20, 12:00, 1:50, 2:20, 4:10, 4:40/6:40, 7:10
INVICTUS (PG-13) 11:45, 2:45, 5:45
UP IN THE AIR (R) 11:05, 1:35, 4:25/7:25
ARMORED (PG-13) 11:10, 1:20, 3:40/6:50
NINJA ASSASSIN (R) 11:35, 1:55, 4:50/7:05
THE BLIND SIDE (PG-13) 1:40, 4:30/7:20
PRECIOUS: BASED ON THE NOVEL "PUSH" BY SAPHIRE (R) 1:15, 3:50/6:55

P and G Montgomery Mall Cinema	
Bethesda	

ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: THE SQUEAKQUEL (PG) 1:05, 3:05, 5:05
THE PRINCESS AND THE FROG (G) 1:00, 3:10, 5:15
THE BLIND SIDE (PG-13) 2:15, 5:00

the mind of the devil with this fiery adaptation of C.S. Lewis' epistolary book about a demon and his disciple, through Jan. 3, \$29-\$49. Lansburgh Theatre, 450 7th St. NW; 887-487-8849, Screwtape onstage.com.

Showboat: The musical about life on the Mississippi provides a look into the nature of change and prejudice, through Jan. 17, \$30-\$57. Signature Theatre, 4200 Campbell Ave., Arlington; 703-573-7328, Signature-theatre.org.

The Solid Gold Cadillac: Corporate greed and economic malaise aren't just for the headlines in this 1953 comedy starring Nancy Robinette, through Jan. 10, \$42-\$63; Studio Theatre, 1501 14th St. NW; 202-332-3300, Studiotheatre.org.

Snow Queen: A winter-worthy tale from Hans Christian Anderson is brought to light with all the flair and color of Synetic Family Theater, through Jan. 10, \$12. 4041 Campbell

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HARD-KNOCK LIFE: It's tough being young, artistic and poor. Inspired by "La Boheme," the modern rock opera "Rent" looks at the struggles of a group of friends living in '80s New York. Keegan Theatre's production is at Church Street Theatre.

Ave., Arlington; 703-824-8060, Synetictheater.org.

Teddy Roosevelt and the Ghostly Mistletoe: When a president says no, that means no. Unless you're the mischievous first children and Dad won't let you have a Christmas tree. This family-friendly mystery runs through Dec. 30, \$18. Kennedy Center, 2700 F St. NW; 202-467-4600, Kennedy-center.org.

Too Much Light Makes the Baby Go Blind: Chicago's Neo-Futurists tackle 30 plays in 60 minutes in an exhausting feat of up-to-the-minute improv, through Jan. 2, \$30. Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company, 641 D St. NW; 202-393-3939, Woollymammoth.net.

Young Frankenstein: The laughter comes with fury — and lots of song-and-dance numbers — as this adaptation Mel Brooks' classic film stomps in from Broadway, through Jan. 10, \$37-\$150; 800-444-1324, Kennedy-center.org.

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Longtime pair Tim Robbins and Susan Sarandon part ways **23**

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The 'Real' You?

A friend of mine ran into three "Real World DC" cast members at a party. They were nervous. The MTV reality series debuts on Dec. 30 at 10 p.m. The cast members were afraid the EDITORS would make them look, like, STUPID or something and not focus on their efforts to improve the world.



A recent reality show contestant had a different perspective on the power of TV editors. I recently spoke to Eli Kirshtein, who made it to the final five of this season's "Top Chef." I asked the Atlanta foodie if he's like he seemed on TV — a bit brash and immature at times. He had a contradictory response. On the one hand, yes: "The producers may ask leading questions, but at the end of the day, if you said it, you said it."

On the other hand, he noted, one's TV persona isn't necessarily spot-on. "You think you know who I am from that minute of airtime," Kirshtein said. "That's funny!" Nonetheless, viewers will pass judgment. In fact, they've already begun to critique the Real Worlders. One comment for the series trailer on YouTube accuses the cast of committing the cardinal sin of reality TV: "This looks boooooorrrriing." Believe me, no editor would aim for that.

@ Comments? Give Marc your feedback: expressnightout.com/muse

Elementary, Dear Hottie

'Sherlock Holmes' gets a new makeover with handsome stars and an action-y plot

Film Review

Take it from a lifelong fan of Arthur Conan Doyle: Robert Downey Jr. is so NOT Sherlock Holmes.

That's not a hindrance — in fact, it's a big help — as he and director Guy Ritchie bring Conan Doyle's dusty Victorian-age detective into the modern world.

Enough of the trappings are left in their action romp "Sherlock Holmes" — the lightning-fast cerebrations, the encyclopedic knowledge of London, the compulsive single-mindedness — to make Downey a reasonably faithful embodiment of the figure Conan Doyle created.

Revisionists have done a number on Holmes before — he was psychoanalyzed by Sigmund Freud in "The Seven-Per-Cent Solution" and spoofed by Gene Wilder in "The Adventure of Sherlock Hol-

mes' Smarter Brother."

The failing of Ritchie is the drab plot they built around Holmes, an uninspired tale of a secret society and potentially supernatural doings. It's nonsense, a dumb Hollywood treatment that's made watchable by clever chases and scuffles, a superb recreation of old London in its splendor and squalor, and the amiable interplay of the actors.

Jude Law heads the supporting cast as Holmes' colleague, Watson, less a loyal sidekick in Ritchie's creation than an odd-couple roomie in

a bickering-buddy bromance.

Ritchie piles on the excess. It serves him well in fashioning 1880s London, with the pardon-our-dust construction of the landmark Tower Bridge a pivotal element.

Anyone who wants their Holmes unsullied by revisionists can seek out the TV adaptations of Holmes stories starring Jeremy Brett, an ideal incarnation of the detective as the author wrote him.

Who knows? Maybe the movie will make a few viewers go discover Conan Doyle for the first time.

DAVID GERMAIN (AP)

The plot may be thin as mist in a London alleyway, but the bromance between Watson and Holmes is strong — in a bickery, old-married-couple sort of way.

"Sherlock Holmes"

- **Director:** Guy Ritchie
- **Stars:** Robert Downey Jr., Jude Law, Rachel McAdams
- **In a Nutshell:** Holmes' big mystery is the case of Lord Blackwood (Mark Strong). Hanged for a series of ritual murders, Blackwood won't stay in his grave.
- **For Fans of:** Hot sidekicks, Victorian England, shirtless literary figures



Robert Downey Jr. is SO not Sherlock Holmes. That's not a hindrance — in fact, it's a big help.

Category Get a 'Clue'

Guy Ritchie and Robert Downey Jr. are hardly the first to turn Sherlock Holmes on his head. In 1988, the great Michael Caine donned the deerstalker cap as a bumbling, drunkard version of sir Arthur Conan Doyle's classic detective in "Without a Clue." Just as in the new version, Watson (Ben Kingsley) was the brains behind Holmes — only "Clue" played the scenario for laughs in the highly entertaining spoof. The game's afoot on DVD. MATT SWENSON (EXPRESS)



expressnightout.com ►► Dr. Andrea Bonior examines the weekend's 14th and U snowball fight fracas from a sociological perspective ►► With "It's Complicated" opening Friday, we recap Steve Martin's finest romantic roles ►► Get entertainment updates all day on our Twitter feed: Twitter.com/expressnightout

TV tonight **lookout**

High Time for Rhyme

Christmas reviews can be so boring, but you'll read these without snoring

Holidays

We've finally arrived at that marvelous time when I feel compelled to write listings in rhyme. Some shows are repeated, following traditions quite solemn, so forgive me, dear readers, if I borrow from earlier columns.

In "It's a Wonderful Life" (8 p.m., NBC), George Bailey imagines he's never been born. That's the dark, existential gist of this Frank Capra corn. He screams at his kids and gives his wife a good fright. But he also sings "Buffalo Gals, Won't You Come Out Tonight."

TBS is so certain of "A Christmas Story" (8 p.m., TBS) and its enchanting powers that it's broadcasting nothing but for 24 hours. If you've never had the pleasure, you should give it a good try out.



If your Major Award grosses out your wife, she can watch "It's a Wonderful Life."

It's a movie about a kid, a BB-gun and the folks who say, "You'll shoot your eye out."

If you don't think your holiday spirit could get any higher, you could always spend "Christmas With the Mormon Tabernacle Choir" (9 p.m., PBS).

Not every Christmas movie has memorable things to say, but "Fred Claus" (8 p.m., Cinemax) seems a role Vince Vaughn was

destined to play.

And while Tim Allen was funny as Santa way back in 1994, by the time of "Santa Claus 3" (8 p.m., Disney) it was funny no more.

If a marathon of "Deadliest Catch" (9 a.m. to 3 a.m., Discovery) proves a bit too scary, there's always "White Christmas" (8 p.m., AMC), starring George Clooney's crooning aunt Rosemary. **KEVIN MCDONOUGH (UNITED FEATURE SYNDICATE)**

Best Bets

FOX
8:00

Bones Pop princess Cyndi Lauper guest stars as Angela's (Michaela Conlin) psychic, Avalon Harmonia, who alerts a skeptical Brennan and Booth (Emily Deschanel, David Boreanaz) to the presence of a mass grave beneath a fountain.



CW
9:00

Supernatural Talk about a bad Santa! In this episode, Sam and Dean (Jared Padalecki, Jensen Ackles) are checking out some killings in which the victims were yanked up chimneys — ouch! The perp turns out to be a demon who's sort of a Bizarro St. Nick.

CBS
10:00



The Mentalist Patrick (Simon Baker) and the team investigate when a mobster in witness protection is murdered. Frankie Ingrassia, Fredric Lehne and Dan Lauria guest star in "Red Sauce."

CBS
11:35

Christmas at the Cathedral: Beacon of Hope The Most Rev. Paul J. Swain, bishop of the Diocese of Sioux Falls, S.D., delivers a Christmas blessing from St. Joseph Cathedral in an event featuring the South Dakota Symphony Orchestra, the St. Joseph Cathedral Choir and others. **(TRIBUNE MEDIA)**

Specials



Elf Help

Santa's elves suffer job burnout, too. In this charming animated special (8 p.m., ABC), Dave Foley gives voice to Wayne, a member of the elite elf team that prepares for and oversees Santa's arrival at children's houses. He was hoping for a promotion; instead, he has to stay where he is and train an annoying new assistant. Of course, no Christmas special would be complete without a crisis and a lesson learned. **(TRIBUNE MEDIA)**

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Today's Question

DID YOU USE UP ALL OF YOUR ALLOTTED VACATION TIME THIS YEAR?

VOTE AT EXPRESSNIGHTOUT.COM OR TEXT A FOR YES OR B FOR NO TO 98999

Wednesday's Results

DOES THE RISING SUCCESS OF E-READERS SPELL DOOM FOR PRINTED BOOKS?



"We'll always have a need for printed books. Would you give your Kindle to your toddler so he can read about the three little pigs?"

COMMENTER WAS BUF., NOW WAS.

"Some people just have to have the latest gadget. Whatever blows your hair back. As for me, I cannot imagine reading a book on an electronic gadget. Yeah, right: Just imagine, curling up and reading ... with your Kindle. No, thanks."

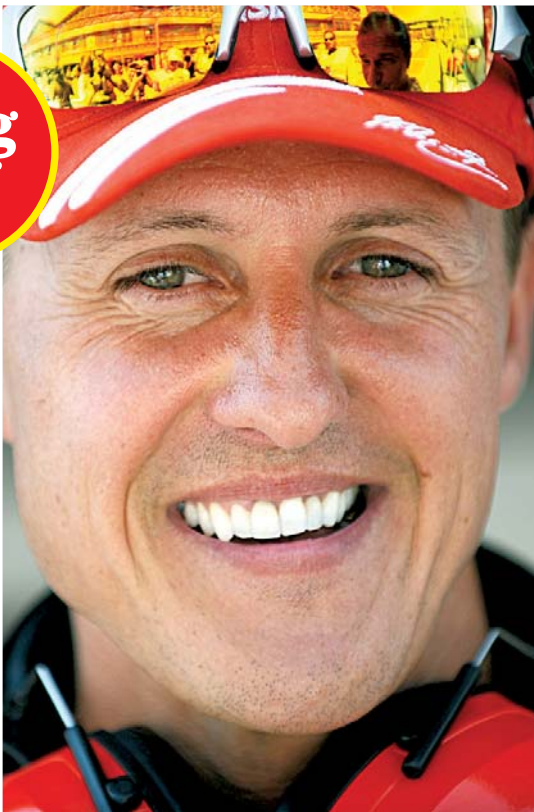
COMMENTER GORILLA

SEE HOW YOUR METRO STATION VOTED AT WWW.EXPRESSNIGHTOUT.COM



"The cable companies suck. All of them. Some suck less than others. But they all suck. We need someone to whip them into shape. And that someone may be Apple."

— TECHCRUNCH.COM THINKS A PROPOSAL BY APPLE TO OFFER A SUBSCRIPTION-BASED TV SERVICE OVER THE INTERNET COULD BRING THE CABLE TELEVISION INDUSTRY TO ITS KNEES.



"I am not sure how I feel about it. I am elated at the thought of getting to see him drive a Formula-1 car again. But I am pretty much devastated to see him switch loyalties from Ferrari to Mercedes."

— SUSHUBH.NET IS CONFLICTED ABOUT MICHAEL SCHUMACHER'S POTENTIAL RETURN TO OPEN WHEEL RACING.



"For all who don't know why this is extra funny, wingnuts like to mock Obama using the name Barry, because that's the name Obama used when he was younger."

— OCHAIRBALL.BLOGSPOT.COM WAS AMUSED THAT PRESIDENT OBAMA CALLED IN TO VIRGINIA GOV. TIM KAINE'S RADIO SHOW TUESDAY AS "BARRY FROM D.C."

"A BLOG WAR is brewing for 2010, and it's going to enrich a whole lot of loose lipped sources, while making life more hellish for athletes."

— BUSINESSINSIDER.COM THINKS GOSSIP SITE TMZ.COM STARTING AN ALL-SPORTS WEB SITE WILL BE A GAME-CHANGER IN THE COVERAGE OF ATHLETES' LIVES.



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Look for site highlights in today's Express.

puzzles **lookout**

Horoscope

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) You're likely to be reminded of how things used to be, but don't get lost in a storm of nostalgia and memories.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) The more succinctly you can express yourself, the better. That will leave you more time for doing, as opposed to talking.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20) You're likely to share opinions that make all the difference to those who are less knowledgeable than you are. You'll be rewarded.

ARIES (March 21-April 19) What others think is a foregone conclusion may be a point worth debating as far as you're concerned. Nothing to you is certain — yet.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) As you think back to certain episodes in your past, you'll realize how far you've come, and how well you've done for yourself.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) Your powers of observation will serve you and others quite well. Make sure that you're where the action is, for best results.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) Stay in touch with the kinds of influences that can only be felt by those who are really paying attention. They can speak volumes to you.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) As time passes, you'll come to a realization that makes you look forward to the days to come with much more relish and enthusiasm.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) A conversation you have anticipated for quite some time may not pan out quite as you had hoped. Set someone straight.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) Avoid getting into any kind of argument borne out of a difference in personal taste. Remember: to each his own.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) Are you really ready to set off on the journey you have planned for yourself? Some last-minute adjustments to the itinerary may be required.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) How you organize your thoughts and ideas before setting them in motion will make all the difference. You may want a second opinion.

Scrabble Grams

PAR SCORE 145-155, BEST SCORE 241

A ₁	E ₁	O ₁	L ₁	R ₁	K ₅	B ₃

--

RACK 1

A ₁	E ₁	O ₁	B ₃	N ₁	W ₄	J ₈

Triple
Word Score

--

RACK 2

A ₁	A ₁	E ₁	Y ₄	S ₁	R ₁	D ₂

--

RACK 3

E ₁	O ₁	T ₁	D ₂	N ₁	S ₁	M ₃

2nd Letter
Double

--

RACK 4

Yesterday's Solution

D ₂	O ₁	N ₁	K ₅	E ₁	Y ₄		RACK 1 =	14
E ₁	G ₂	G ₂	H ₄	E ₁	A ₁	D ₂	RACK 2 =	67
H ₄	O ₁	S ₁	T ₁	A ₁	G ₂	E ₁	RACK 3 =	61
S ₁	C ₃	R ₁	A ₁	W ₄	N ₁	Y ₄	RACK 4 =	80
PAR SCORE 155-165								TOTAL 222

FOUR RACK TOTAL

Make a 2-7 letter word from the letters in each row. Add points of each word using scoring directions at right. 7-letter words get a 50-point bonus. Blank tiles used as any letter have no point value. Scrabble is a trademark of Hasbro in the U.S. and Canada.

Sudoku

DIFFICULT

	2			1				7
	7				8	5		1
5				6				
	6						5	
			9		5			
	3						9	
					6			3
1		3	2				4	
2				7			1	

Yesterday's Solution

5	2	8	4	1	6	9	7	3
1	6	7	2	9	3	8	4	5
4	9	3	7	5	8	6	1	2
3	1	4	9	2	7	5	8	6
9	8	6	3	4	5	7	2	1
2	7	5	8	6	1	3	9	4
8	5	1	6	7	4	2	3	9
6	3	2	1	8	9	4	5	7
7	4	9	5	3	2	1	6	8

Need more Sudoku?
Find another puzzle in the Comics section of the Post every Sunday and in the Style section Monday through Saturday.

© PUZZLES BY PAPPOCOM

Comics

FIND MORE COMICS AT EXPRESSNIGHTOUT.COM

POOCH CAFE | PAUL GILLIGAN



PEARLS BEFORE SWINE | STEPHAN PASTIS



Forecast

38 | 28

Today: Partly sunny today. Mostly cloudy tonight.

41 | 40

Tomorrow: Rain, some ice early tomorrow. Rain tomorrow night.

Looking Ahead

SAT SUN MON

49 | 35 44 | 28 40 | 27

Sun and Moon

Sunrise today: 7:25 a.m.
Sunset today: 4:51 p.m.
Moonrise today: 11:38 a.m.
Moonset today: none

Almanac

Normal high: 45
Record high: 71
Normal low: 30
Record low: 7

FORECAST BY ACCUWEATHER.COM ©2009

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XX232C 2x7.5

lookout puzzles

Crossword

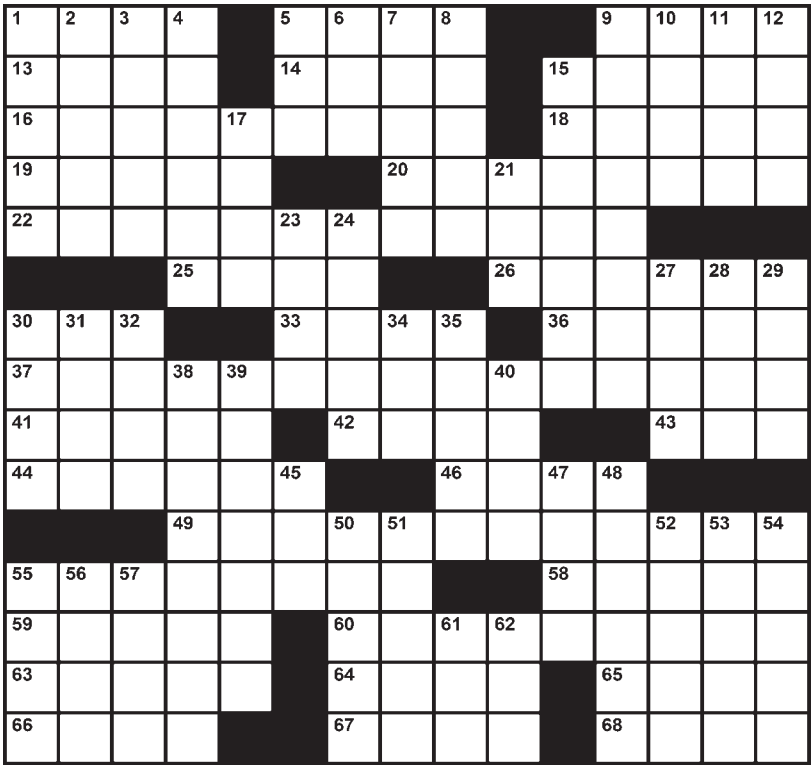
"HOLIDAY MUSINGS"

ACROSS

- 1 Drums' edges
- 5 Addition figures
- 9 Cote chorus
- 13 Superior to
- 14 Ship's front
- 15 Ragout of roasted game
- 16 Seasonal position
- 18 Balance sheet listing
- 19 Accordion fold
- 20 Love, hate, fear, etc.
- 22 Orderly
- 25 "Avast!" responder
- 26 Wild
- 30 Some spare tires, essentially
- 33 Indian bread
- 36 Without compassion
- 37 Classic ghost story
- 41 Early invention
- 42 Price list word
- 43 Extraordinary shoe width
- 44 Speedometer part
- 46 Like some cheeks or futures
- 49 Not permissible
- 55 Deeply felt
- 58 Root used in perfumery
- 59 They may be scattered
- 60 Conceals a present
- 63 Speaks unclearly
- 64 Way to keep the keel?
- 65 "The Grapes of Wrath" migrant
- 66 Change for a hundred, perhaps
- 67 In ____ (owing money)
- 68 Abandons bachelorhood

DOWN

- 1 Some pinball targets
- 2 Mediterranean boot?
- 3 Some beauty marks
- 4 Food fight sound effects
- 5 Whirlpool whereabouts
- 6 Barista's container



EDITED BY TIMOTHY E. PARKER

- 7 Liturgical song
- 8 Hindu teacher
- 9 Vatican attraction
- 10 "And another thing ..."
- 11 Worshipper's "So be it!"
- 12 Uses a tuffet
- 15 Like Rushdie's "Verses"
- 17 Worry obsessively
- 21 Mozart's "L ____ del Cairo"
- 23 Provides with a crew
- 24 Diminish in intensity
- 27 Boggy earth
- 28 Baby wipes additive
- 29 Grammy winner Lovett
- 30 Unweaned deer
- 31 Be heartsick
- 32 "With this ring, I ____ ..."

- 34 Anti-smoking org.
- 35 Abalone product
- 38 Calorie counters, hopefully
- 39 Affliction
- 40 Class requiring goggles
- 45 Auditory canal locale
- 47 Use the overhead compartment
- 48 Peter of Peter, Paul and Mary
- 50 Behind bars
- 51 The "C" in C.S. Lewis
- 52 Truck stopper
- 53 Cholesterol, e.g.
- 54 They make a bloom blossom?
- 55 Boundless

- 56 Atoll component
- 57 Treat like a pariah
- 61 Abe's birthday month
- 62 You'll have a blast with it

Yesterday's Solution



Today in History

- 1814** The United States and Britain sign Treaty of Ghent in Belgium, ending War of 1812
- 1979** About 80,000 Soviet troops invade Afghanistan to oust Communist party leader Hafizullah Amin.
- 1989** Gen. Manuel Noriega takes refuge in the Vatican diplomatic mission in Panama City as resistance to U.S. troops collapses.

express



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**CRIMINAL RECORDS****This Would So Not Be an Issue for U.S. Producers**

A British court has blocked an attempt by Boy George to appear on a reality show. George had hoped to appear on "Celebrity Big Brother" despite being on probation for assaulting a male escort. Probation officers argue that allowing George to appear on the show would undermine the reputation of London's probation service and public confidence in the judicial system. (AP)

NO EXCUSES**At Least He Didn't Blame It on Exhaustion**

Aerosmith frontman Steven Tyler has entered a rehabilitation facility to treat an addiction to painkillers he has taken to cope with 10 years of performance injuries. "I love Aerosmith. I love performing as the lead singer in Aerosmith. I am grateful for all of the support and love I am receiving and am committed to getting things taken care of," he said in a statement. (AP)

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FRAZER HARRISON/GETTY IMAGES

If Susan Sarandon's publicist thought this would get less play if she announced it during the holidays ... well, she was wrong.

HE WAS TEAM EDWARD**She Was Team Jacob**

Tim Robbins and Susan Sarandon, who have been a couple for more than two decades, have split up, People.com reported. "Actress Susan Sarandon and her partner of 23 years, actor Tim Robbins have announced that they separated over the summer," her rep Teal Cannaday told People in a statement. "No further comments will be made." (EXPRESS)

Kate Hate**'Controversial' = 'Grating'**

Kate Gosselin's been dropped from a television show being shopped as "The View" for working moms. Executives thought she was too controversial, Radaronline reported. Gosselin taped the pilot in September. (EXPRESS)

CHRISTMAS**And Visions of Sugarplums Got Pummeled in Her Head**

Amy Winehouse was charged Wednesday in connection with an assault at a theater, London police said. The singer was arrested after she presented herself at a police station with her lawyer. She was charged with a public order of offense and common assault following the Saturday incident, police said. (AP)



"My New years resolution is to finally stand up for myself, not let myself be controled+manipulated by Jon. I wish for him out of my life."

— HAILEY GLASSMAN POSTS A NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION REGARDING EX-BOYFRIEND JON GOSSELIN ON HER TWITTER ACCOUNT.

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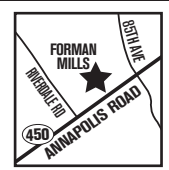
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